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THE  
C A S E  
O F  
Mr. John Simson  
Professor of Divinity in the Uni-  
versity of Glasgow.

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The Second Edition.

Containing, beside what was in the former Edition, an ABSTRACT of the *Pleadings*, and all the *Papers* which were before the last *General Assembly*.

The PREFACE is also much augmented, and continued to the Rising of the *Assembly*.

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L O N D O N :

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•Hilf Gott mich oft ni an und zu thilen gneid und  
bus gegenwärts so zu kann es A mi gern  
fist oft erlöse mir und ich will es dir lie-  
gen. Ich. J. C. G.



W O O W A G I  
and God is not angry. If so, he will  
not let us go. But if he does not let us



# P R E F A C E.



T was thought proper before the sitting of the last General Assembly, which was to judge of Professor *Simson's* Trial, commenc'd before the Presbytery of *Glasgow*, and carried on by them, with the Assistance of the Committee appointed for that Purpose by the preceeding General Assembly, to print a Collection of the Authentick Papers that were Parts of that Process, and to connect them by prefixing an Historical Preface, which was little more then an Abstract of the Minutes of the said Committee and the Presbytery of *Glasgow*, the only Records at that Time into which this Process had entered.

And now, seeing this Affair has been the chief Employment of the late General Assembly; and that they did not finish the Trial, but left what remains to the next Assembly, appointing in the mean while a Committee to prepare and ripen it for a Decision: The same Reasons do require the publishing of this more

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correct Edition of the Trial, with a Continuation of the Proceedings in it before the last Assembly, and several Papers that were then added to the Process.

This Publication is intended for the Use of the Committee abovementioned of the last Assembly, who are to be the Judges in the interim; and of all the Members of the Church who may in the next General Assembly give the final Decision to this Cause; and likewise of any other Persons whose Concern for the Truth, which they may suppose to be interested in the Conduct and Issue of this Affair, or whose Curiosity may lead them to desire to see a genuine Account of it.

It may not be amiss to give the Reader a general View of the true State of this Matter, before he proceed to look unto the Detail of the several Steps of it.

It will appear to the candid and understanding Reader of the following Account, and, if a real Concern for Truth be his Motive for looking into it, he must observe with Pleasure, that the Truth is not in the least Danger, and that, as the Process now stands, the Interest of that is almost intirely out of the Question; and it appears now not to be the Cause of Truth, but of a particular Man that is in Agitation: The Question that lies before the Supreme Judicature of the Church of *Scotland*, is not concerning the *Truth or Falshood of Opinions*, but is a Question purely of *Fact*; whether Professor *Simson* has at any Time uttered Expressions that were not the most proper, or exactly agreeable to the Orthodox Doctrine of this Church; which, it appears, he has always taught and still continues to assert and maintain, as his own Faith?

This will be evident to be the true State of the Case, and must afford a comfortable View of it to every good Christian, who may have been alarm'd before the sitting of the late Assembly with the *Melancholy Appearance of Error coming in amongst us*; for so far even

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the more cautious and modest ventured to pronounce, that there were such Appearances. It will now be seen, what were the Foundation of these Appearances; that they were without any real Ground, such as the too fearful and credulous Lovers of the Truth apprehended, before they could examine the Case with an impartial Care.

The Act of the Assembly 1726, appointing Inquiry to be made into Mr. Simson's Opinions and Doctrine concerning the Holy Trinity, proceeds upon the Consideration of certain *Surmises and Reports of unsound and erroneous Doctrine being taught at Glasgow*, which Reports had spread so far, that several Presbyteries had instructed their Commissioners, to propose to the Assembly that Inquiry might be made into the Grounds of those Reports. How or by what Means these *Surmises* did arise, and these *Reports* came to be spread and propagated, shall not be here inquired into nor accounted for: Altho' 'tis pretty remarkable, that when the Libel came to be framed against Mr. Simson, tho' it took in as large a Space of Time as could well be done; yet it goes no further back then sometime in the Year 1725: And by the Proof it appears to have been towards the End of the Year 1725, that is the earliest Period when any Thing exceptionable is alledged to have been uttered by the Professor; and yet in the Beginning of the Year 1726, the Report, it seems, is so far spread, that several Presbyteries do then give Instructions to their Commissioners of Assembly about it: The Professor's Colleges commenced in October 1725, the Assembly sat the Beginning of May 1726, the Ground of those Reports is not said to have been given by the Professor till sometime after the Commencement of his College, the Chief Article found proven is said by one of the Witnesses to have been uttered in December 1725; and the Instructions from the Presbyteries, some of them pretty distant from Glasgow, must have been given a considerable

rabic Time before *May 1726*; so that these *Surmises* and *Reports* have spread with a Velocity so extraordinary, as might be apt to make a Stranger, at least, suspect that some Industry had been used in propagating them.

The Inquiry, appointed by that Act, into the *Grounds* of these *Reports* and the *Opinions* and *Doctrines* of Mr. *Simson*, has been made with great Fidelity and Diligence by the *Presbytery of Glasgow*; so that nothing was omitted to make a Discovery of the Professor's *erroneous Doctrines* or *Opinions*, in case he had truly vented the one, or held and believed the other.

The Inquiry into his *Opinions* was indeed managed in such a Way, as the Professor did not think agreeable to the Appointment of the Act of the Assembly, which forbids the Inquirers to *infest upon any Article* not contained in the *Word of God, the Confession of Faith, and the Larger and Shorter Catechisms of this Church*: The Professor imagined, they were carrying their Inquiries into his *Opinions*, farther than the Act of Assembly intended: And believed it was not sufficient to authorize their Questions or oblige him to answer them, that they might think the Answers to them were contained by *Consequence* or by *Interpretation* in the *Scriptures or Confession of Faith*, because, at that Rate, the Limitation upon their Inquiry might be intirely eluded: For if they should go beynd what was *expressly contained in the Scriptures or Confession, &c.* they were the Judges what was therein contain'd by *Interpretation* or *Consequence*, and might carry their Inquiry as far as they thought fit; and might, after he should answer their first Queries, put new Queries to him, and so on without any End or Limitation that he could perceive: And, at the same Time, might put to him Queries concerning which the Church has never yet given her Judgment, nor perhaps many of her Members ever form'd

form'd a distinct Opinion ; and which, probably, were the Inquirers themselves each of them separately to make Answers to, their Notions and Answers might not exactly agree. Any Body may judge, that to answer such Queries, were very dangerous for a Professor, of whose Errors so many *Surmises* and *Reports* had arisen ; and had such a violent Course, as shew'd they had made no small Impression on the Minds of many People, and made him a very unfit Person to make the first Declarations concerning Points never before established by Authority in this Church.

It was the Apprehension of these Consequences of the *Method of Inquiry into Opinions*, that was taken with the Professor ; and because he thought, that to require him to answer such Questions as above described, was an Infringement of the Liberty which the Laws of the Land, as well as of the Gospel and this Church, had left to him and every Man ; that he declined giving Answers to the Queries proposed to him by the Presbytery of Glasgow, till his Objections to the Competency of these Queries, and against their being agreeable to the Act of Assembly, should be properly cognosced and determined : And not because he truly differed in Opinion as to the Subject of these Queries, from the Church, or even from the Members who put them to him.

This Declining however to give a ready Answer to those Questions, had very bad Consequences with Respect to himself ; and many think it was an unlucky or imprudent Step in Matter of Conduct, whatever Grounds he had for it in Matter of Law, or the Merits of the Question itself: For by Means of this the Jealousies and Suspicions that had been conceived were confirmed and increased ; and many People so far mistook the Professor, as to imagine that he declined to answer these Questions, as not daring to declare his real Sentiments upon the Subject of them : This Conceit, however, was neither altogether charitable, nor had any real

real Foundation in Fact, as may be very well presumed, at least, from what has appeared in the formal Trial of the Professor, upon the Libel.

The Sum of what is discovered in that Trial, so far as it has gone, concerning the Professor's Opinions and Doctrine, which were the Subject of the Inquiry appointed to be made by the Assembly 1726, by Reason of the *Surmises* and *Reports* that had gone abroad of their being unsound, comes to this,

That the Professor has been in Use, in his Lectures, constantly and habitually to teach the Orthodox Doctrine of our *Confession of Faith* concerning the *Trinity*, not deceitfully or in Pretence only, but *bona fide*, with Satisfaction, and as his own Opinion.

That particularly, he has always taught the *Supreme and true Deity of the Son of God, and his Equality with the Father, as to all the Essential Perfections of the Divine Nature*: and that he has been in use to refute, to the best of his Ability and Skill, the Errors maintained by Hereticks, as to this Doctrine; especially the several Branches of the *Arian Heresy*, and even the Articles in which Dr. Clark has differ'd from the receiv'd Orthodox Opinion.

The Professor has likewise in the most solemn Manner at the Bar of the General Assembly, declared, *That as he at first became a Member of the Church of Scotland, and embraced her Doctrine, because he truly believed it, as well as he lik'd and approv'd of her Worship, Discipline and Government; so he still adhered to his Belief of that Doctrine, and that he never knowingly or designedly, vented or maintained any Proposition contrary to, or inconsistent with that Doctrine; and that for that Reason only he gave the Church and himself the Trouble to stand upon his Defence: For that in Reality, if he had altered his Opinion in any Point of Doctrine held by this Church, he would have frankly and ingenuously declared it to the Presbytery of Glasgow, or to the General*

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ral Assembly ; and would have chearfully withdrawn himself from the Church, to some Place where he might be at Liberty to enjoy his new Opinion, if any such he had truly conceived.

The Professor yet further, to give the most ample Satisfaction as to the Soundness of his Opinions, in the Points of Doctrine to which his Libel relates, did give in to the Assembly in Writing, a plain and short Declaration of his Faith, concerning those Truths that are directly opposite to the Errors charged upon him in the Libel : Tho' they are generally not charged upon him as directly held or maintained by him, but as being somewhat implied, or too much favoured by the Phrases which he has used in speaking of those Subjects. And tho' that Declaration of the Professor's relates only to such Articles of the Libel as had been found relevant by the late Assembly ; yet it will be evident to any one, that it contains an Assertion of the Truths that are opposite to and inconsistent with all the Errors to which any other Article of the Libel relates, as well as these whereof the Relevancy is found.

There is no Reason, either on Account of common Charity, or the particular Circumstances of this Case, the private Character of the Person accused, or the Proof that has been brought of his Method of Teaching, to have the least Suspicion against the Veracity or Ingenuity of this habitual Orthodoxy of the Professor's Lectures in his Divinity School, and of his Declarations by Word and Writing exhibited before the General Assembly : If he truly were an Heretick in his Heart, and had intended to instil those erroneous Principles into his Scholars, is it credible that he could have taught them in such a Manner, as not to discover his own real Sentiments, or teach them the Opinions he designed to propagate : But on the contrary, leave his Scholars satisfied and persuaded that their Professor taught and believed the Confession of Faith, and that they were learn-

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learning the Doctrine of it from him ? Strange Heretick ! who has never made one Proselyte among his own Disciples, nor even discover'd to them that their Master held any heretical Principles.

The Professor's personal Character is such, as must remove all Suspicion with every Body, the least acquainted with it, of his being a *crafty Dissembler of his private Sentiments for the Sake of his worldly Interest.* It is well known, that his Temper leans not to any Excess on that Side ; but rather the contrary, that he is open and ingenuous, even exceeding the Bounds of an allowable Caution : And by that only has exposed himself to be mistaken, at the same Time that in Reality he differs not in his Opinion, from his Brethren : Nor was the Declaration, last given in by him to the Assembly, the Assertion of any Thing *new*, or *different* from what he had advanced before, even in the Papers writ by him in this Trial ; the Declaration is exactly conformable to these, and is in Effect extracted out of them ; it is only made more short and simple, confining itself to the precise Points in Question, and directly adapted to contradict the Errors alledged against the Professor in the Libel.

Where then is the Danger to be justly apprehended from this Man ? Or, where is the melancholy Appearance that Error is to be introduced into this Church, by his Means ? Unless the Prosecution itself shall give Occasion to it, contrary to the Intention of them who rais'd it, by setting the Multitude of the Vulgar to think and discourse more frequently and freely of that *High Mystery*, than it is convenient for themselves or the Truth they should : But if this should happen, which the Professor will be as much afflicted at as any Man, it will not be imputable to him, for he has neither taught nor does hold or believe any Heretical Opinion on the Subject.

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What then has been the Ground of all these *Surmis-*  
*ses* and *Reports*, of the *Alarm* that has been taken, and  
of the *melancholly Appearances* that many have imagi-  
ned they saw? Why, in Reality no more than this at  
most, that *once*, and but once in all the Course of the  
Professor's Teaching, Two or Three of his Scholars  
have swore, that he uttered an Expression or Two,  
which, taken as they rehearse it, cannot well be recon-  
ciled with the Truth, with the Professor's ordinary Do-  
ctrine, or with his present Declaration. He is not con-  
scious to himself that he ever uttered these Expressions;  
nor are they remember'd by a good Number of Students,  
who attended his Lectures as carefully, and who, by  
their Depositions appear to be fully as judicious as those  
who deponed they heard them: But if he did utter  
them, it was without any ill Design; and was but a  
Trip in Expression incident to all Men, especially to one  
in his Circumstances as to Health then and sometime  
before.

Now supposing these Expressions ever so clearly  
prov'd, the Professor may be to blame as deficient some-  
what in Caution, or Prudence, in not keeping a stricter  
Guard over his Speech, but that can make him no Her-  
etick, nor put his Students or the Church in Danger  
of the Introduction of such dreadful Errors as have been  
apprehended; Errors, such as it was no Wonder, the  
Ministers of this Church should be deeply alarmed at  
the Appearance of, and animated with a Zeal to give  
a proper Check to them, if any such had really been  
found in one of her Members. But the Spirit of Zeal  
in punishing Offenders, no more than that of Martyr-  
dom, requires not that we should be fond to seek Occa-  
sions of exerting it: It is sufficient that we be ready to  
suffer, or cause others to suffer when it cannot be avoid-  
ed. Wherefore it is not to be doubted, that the most  
zealous Friends to Truth in this Church will rejoice and  
be thankful when they find, that the *melancholly Ap-*  
*b 2* *pear-*

pearance of Error which threatened us, is truly no more than a Phantom or false Appearance, which evanishes upon a nearer Prospect and nicer Examination, as the impartial Reader of the following Process will perceive.

UPON the sixteenth February 1726, when Professor Simson was so very ill of an Indisposition, which had lasted a Year and a half, that his Life was almost despaired of, as was generally known at Glasgow, Mr. Charles Coats, Minister at Govan, without first speaking to the Professor himself, represented to the Presbytery, That he had heard, that Professor Simson had taught several Errors that Winter concerning the Doctrine of the Holy Trinity, to whose Information some Particulars were (said to have been) added by some other Members.

The Presbytery, instead of enquiring into the Rise, Occasion, Broachers and Grounds of these Reports, as our Form of Process, Chap. vii. Sect. 3. (printed, Page 47. of this Collection) directs, thought fit to appoint their Moderator, with two other Members, to confer with the Professor, and acquaint him with the above Report, of his having taught erroneous Doctrine; particularly, "That *Christus est verus, non summus Deus*; " "non est equalis Patri; non est ens necessarium vel in- " dependens; and that he refuted Pittet's Arguments "for the Equality of the Son with the Father; that "in speaking about that Title in Pittet's Book of the "Chapter about Christ's being *Summus Deus equalis* "Patri, he said, it was to be understood *cum grano* "falsis; that he disowned Christ's *Self-existence*; that "in speaking upon *John xvii. 3.* he said there was a "Sense in which the Words (the only true God) could "not be applied to the Son, but only to the Father." The Committee were likewise instructed to desire that he might lay before the Presbytery what he had taught that

that Session, upon these Heads, and to endeavour his own Vindication.

The Professor was not a little surprised when a Member, who had been with him in the Morning, and knew that he was under the Tryal of a new Medicine, (all former ones having proved unsuccessful) returned in the Afternoon, and acquainted him with what had passed in the Presbytery: But the Professor told him, that his present Condition of Health, was such, that he could not engage in a Conference with a Committee of the Presbytery, without endangering his Life; but if the Presbytery had any Thing to lay to his Charge, they might do it *according to the Rules of the Church*, and he should answer them, if the Lord should restore him to any Measure of Health.

The Committee of the Presbytery did not go to Mr. Simson; but two or three Days after the Meeting of the said Presbytery, Mr. Scot, one of the Committee, came to him, and told him that he was against the Presbytery's appointing that Committee, and such a Conference, upon so nice a Subject, which was apter to make Mistakes than remove them.

The Professor told him, that he conceived that the Presbytery had no Right, as a Judicature, to demand of him what he taught on the above, or any other Points; but if they had any Fault to charge him with, they might do it in *a regular Way*: However, as they were Brethren, he could freely give them, in an *extra-judicial Way*, an Account of his Doctrine on that Subject, being conscious that he had taught nothing that was amis.

Mr. Scot said, That all was done in an *extra-judicial Manner*, and no *Minute taken of it*; but that they, as Friends and Brethren, were desirous to know what the Matter was, that they might contradict these Reports, which they did not believe to be true. Yet there is a Minute of February 16. about it, made up and extracted:

tracted : But it is not known by what Order this is inserted in the Records of the Presbytery.

The Professor promised to Mr. *Sco<sup>t</sup>* to write to them a full Account against their next Meeting, if he got a Note of the Particulars ; which he accordingly obtained the Week following, and found all the Particulars were new to him, having never heard of any such Reports passing of him, except one, *viz.* That he should have said, that when Christ is said to be *Summus Deus*, it is to be taken *cum grano salis*, tho' he had heard a great Rumour in general, that he had taught *Heresy* about the Doctrine of the *Trinity*, and that he was an *Arian*.

The Professor, in consequence of his Promise, tho' in a low State of Health, and using Medicines daily, sent to the Presbytery his Letter, dated *March 2. 1726*, which is printed in this Collection, *Page 1.* and which was read that Afternoon in the Presbytery ; and the Consideration of it delayed to their next Meeting on *March 23.* when it was again read, and the Consideration of it further delayed to their next Meeting.

Upon the 27th of *April*, the Presbytery alledging they found some Difficulties in the Professor's Letter, appointed the Ministers of *Glasgow*, with Principal *Stirling*, to meet as a Committee on the said Letter, and to report their Judgment upon it next Meeting ; but this was their last Meeting before the Assembly.

These Delays of the Consideration of the Professor's Letter, for no less than nine Weeks before the sitting of the General Assembly, seem to have been industriously made : For the Answer of the Commissioners of the Presbytery of *Glasgow* to the Committee of Assembly, (see the Act of Assembly printed, *Page 7.*) *viz.* *That they had appointed a Committee to consider the Professor's Letter, but that the Committee had not yet made Report unto the Presbytery,* seems a little disguised ; that Committee having not been appointed till eight Weeks after

ter the Professor's Letter was read before the Presbytery, and there having been no Meeting of the Presbytery to which they could report before the sitting of the Assembly: And tho' the Commissioners from the Presbytery had no Instructions from their Constituents to endeavour either openly or secretly to procure an Act of Assembly about this Affair of the Professor's; yet it is well known how diligent they were in private to persuade the Members of Assembly of the Necessity of a Committee to assist them; and Mr. *Charles Coats* openly declaimed against the Professor in the Subcommittee of Assembly. This was thought a very extraordinary Practice, to attack a Minister's Character behind his Back in the Supreme Judicature, concerning an Affair in which there had been so little Progress made before the Presbytery, where regularly any Process against a Minister ought to commence; especially when it was known that the Professor was neither call'd to attend the Assembly, nor, if he had been call'd, was in a Condition to attend them by Reason of his Indisposition: And it is evident that a Precedent of this Kind may be of very bad Consequence, seeing no Person can be secure against such Attacks, whereby the most innocent Person's Fame and Reputation may be publickly violated before he can possibly be aware of it.

*May 17.* The General Assembly past the Act which is printed, *Page 7.* of this Collection.

At their next Meeting *June 1st.* it was reported, that the said Committee had not met, because they were informed, that the General Assembly had given Orders thereanent, which had not yet come to hand.

The Act of the Assembly was read in the Presbytery, at their Meeting upon the 13th of *July*, and the Presbytery renewed their Appointment upon their former Committee, adding to them three other Ministers, to go upon the Professor's Letter, and to condescend upon

upon such Questions as might be proper in Consequence of the Assembly's Act.

Upon the 2d of August, the Committee reported, that they had met upon the 27. July then last, and had drawn up the Questions, printed Page 9. which they were of Opinion ought to be put to the Professor. The Presbytery approved of these Questions, and appointed their Moderator to give an Extract of them to \* *The Professor*, desiring him to give in to the Presbytery Answers thereto with his first Conveniency.

The Presbytery thought fit to take this Method, in Consequence of the Assembly's Act; but one so very remote, that it is impossible to reconcile it with these express Words of the Act, which orders both the Presbytery of Glasgow and the Assembly's Committee, *To proceed by all proper Ways of Inquiry*; which must be these prescribed in our Form of Process, that alone are authorised in this Church; and the said Act also restrict them to insist on no Articles that are not contained in our Confession of Faith and Catechisms, which every one may see the Presbytery's Questions are not, the Terms of them not being therein mentioned; but if they meant the same Things therein determined, they should have used the same Terms.

The Professor, by the Advice of his Physicians, went the Week following to the Country for his Health, where he stayed till near the End of September; and so had no Conveniency to think of the Presbytery's Questions, or to attend any of their Meetings: But having received a Message from the Presbytery, at one of their Meetings,

\* It is thus in the Extract delivered to Mr. SIMSON, which occasioned the Clause of his Letter, Page 11th near the Head: Neither his Name nor Designation was in any of their Minutes, till they received his Letter of October the 12th, after which it was inserted; what is printed Page 9th, was taken from a later Extract.

ings, in the Time the Synod, in *October* last, desiring him to give in Answers to their Questions against the 12th of that Month; he sent them the Letter of that Day's Date, which is printed, *Page 10th*.

Upon the 2d of *November*, the Professor waited upon the Presbytery, and humbly desired, that in order to clear him, in giving a suitable Answer to their Questions, they would be pleased to satisfy him with Respect to a few Questions. The 1st, *Whether the Reverend Presbytery thought themselves empowered, by the last General Assembly's Act about him, to demand of him his private Thoughts upon any Point of Divinity, under the Pains mentioned in the said Act?* Here the Professor laid before the Presbytery several Reasons which moved him to think they were not so empowered; which are printed in his Letter to the Committee for Purity of Doctrine, *Page 13, &c.* The 2d, *Whether the Questions they had given him to answer were contained in the Confession of Faith and Catechisms received by this Church?* See *Page 16.* The 3d, *In what Part of the Holy Scriptures, Confession of Faith and Catechisms their Questions are contained and determined?* The 4th, *What Relation they have to his Letter of the 2d. of March then last, or any other Thing that he had vented or taught?*

He further signified to the Presbytery, That he wished they would condescend to give him their Answer to their own Questions, that so he might know their Sentiments of them; and that at present he was not clear to answer their Questions. But the Presbytery thought fit, in Place of giving any Answer to the Professor, to transmit an Account of their Proceedings to the Committee for preserving Purity of Doctrine, that was to meet at Edinburgh upon *Tuesday* then next, and to desire their Advice and Directions what further Steps to make.

The Professor at the same Time wrote a Letter to the said Committee of Assembly, dated the 7th of November, printed *Page 12th* of this Collection, con-

taining an Account of what had past in the Presbytery, and his Reasons against their Method of *Inquisition and Questions.*

The Committee of Assembly having met upon the 9<sup>th</sup> of November, read an Extract of the Presbytery's Procedure, and the Professor's Letter ; and having reasoned thereon, they appointed a Letter to be written to the Presbytery of Glasgow, advising them to point out these Passages in the Professor's Letter, on which these Questions to him are founded, and to take particular Notice of the Passages of the Word of God, and Confession of Faith, and Larger and Shorter Catechisms of this Church, founded thereupon, to which they judge these are contrary. And the said Committee impowered their Moderator (upon Application from the Presbytery of Glasgow) to call the Committee, to meet at that Place, he first advising the Matter with such of the Committee residing in and about Edinburgh, as he could find.

Upon the 23<sup>d</sup> of November, when the Presbytery was met *pro re nata*, for planting of Cumbernauld, the Proceedings of the said Committee for Preservation of Purity of Doctrine, with their Moderator's Letter to the Presbytery were produced, and read : And the Presbytery declared, they were willing to comply with the Advice of the said Committee, and appointed a Committee of their Number to draw up References accordingly.

The said Committee did that same Afternoon give in their References, which the Presbytery approved of ; and appointed the Professor to answer ; and they are printed in this Collection Page 18<sup>th</sup>.

It is evident from these References, that they do not answer the Appointment of the Assembly's Committee ; for they do not so much as adventure to say, that their Questions are founded on the Passages in the Professor's Letter, but only that they gave Occasion for these Questions : Nor do they suggest any one Text of Scripture,

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or Passage of our Confession and Catechisms, to which any Proposition in the Professor's Letter is contrary; but only such Passages as they had in their Eye in drawing up the Queries.

It deserves to be further observed, That the Presbytery put a very singular and unnatural Meaning upon these Words of the Committee of the Assembly's Letter, viz. To point out the Passages in the Professor's Letter, on which these Questions to him are founded, and to take particular Notice of the Passages of the Word of God, and Confession of Faith, and Larger and Shorter Catechisms of this Church founded thereupon, to which they judge these are contrary. Where they take the Relative these, not to refer to the Passages of the Professor's Letter, as it obviously and necessarily does, but to the Questions they had formerly proposed to him: And then give this Comment upon it; That they were to point out these Passages of the Scripture, our Confession and Catechisms, to which the wrong Answers to the Questions would be contrary.

Upon the 5th of January 1727, the Professor gave in to the Presbytery his Answers to their References, Page 21st of this Collection, which were only read, but the Consideration of them was delayed till their next Meeting.

Upon the 18th of January, the Presbytery, after reading their own References, and the Professor's Answers, proposed to Vote, whether the Professor had answered their several Questions: Upon which the Professor told them, That they might save themselves that Trouble; for he had not drawn his Answers with any such Design, for the Reasons he had formerly laid before them on the 2d of November: But that the main Scope of his Answers was, to correct several Mistakes of his Meaning, which the Presbytery had fallen into, and answer the real or seeming Objections founded thereupon, and to show that their Questions had no Foundation.

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tion in his Letter; and he craved that they might consider, whether he had sufficiently done this or not? Which was also urged by several Members of the Presbytery: But others said, that they behoved first to consider whether the Questions were answered, and they might afterwards consider the Professor's Answers in the View that he proposed: And then by Six several Votes they found, that the Professor had answered none of their Questions, save the Sixth.

Then it was moved by some, that the Presbytery should ask the Professor if he would now answer their first five Queries. Others proposed to consider whether the Professor had sufficiently answered the Presbytery's Mistakes and Objections, and thereby removed the Ground of their putting the Questions to him, as seemed to have been agreed to in the Forenoon. Upon which there ensued a Debate for about two Hours amongst the Members: But at last, it was put to the Vote, Whether the First should be voted upon, or the Second; and it carried that the First should be put to the Vote, which was accordingly done. And it was carried by a new Vote, that the Professor should be asked if he would now answer the Presbytery's Queries?

Then the Moderator read over the Questions to the Professor, and demanded his Answer. To which the Professor gave no Answer, but protested against the above two Votes; that he judged himself thereby lefed; because *1mo*, "Tho' the Presbytery made several seeming Objections against the Passages of his Leeter; and, as he thought, committed several Mistakes of his Meaning, upon which their Objections, and also their Questions seemed to be founded; yet they refused to consider whether his Answers to the Presbytery's Referenes did sufficiently remove these Objections. *2do*, That the Presbytery had not followed the Advice of the Assembly's Committee, in pointing out the Passages of the Professor's Letter, on which their

" Quo-

" Questions are founded, and the Passages of the Word  
" of God, our Confession and Catechisms to which these  
" Passages of the Letter were contrary :" But while  
the Professor was dictating his Protest, the Moderator  
thought fit to read over to him the Presbytery's Questi-  
ons, tho' 'tis evident that he neither did nor could at-  
tend to them, being taken up about the entering his  
Protest.

Some Members having advanced in their Debate  
with those Members who pleaded for the Presbytery's  
considering if the Professor had answered the Objections,  
*That they never said there was any Thing in the  
Professor's Letter contrary to the Scripture and our Con-  
fession and Catechisms*, and would not allow it to be  
said that they had made, in their References, any Ob-  
jections against his Letter, as contrary to them : The  
Professor, upon the 19th of January, when the Presby-  
tery was met, repeated before them what these Mem-  
bers had said ; the Truth of which was not contraverted : Upon which he craved that the Presbytery might  
declare, *That they had found nothing in his Letter contra-  
ry to the Scripture, our Confession and Catechisms*. And  
the Moderator having asked the Opinion of all the  
Members, they agreed, *That they had found nothing  
directly contrary to the Scripture, our Confession or Cate-  
chisms, in the Professor's Letter*. And when the Mo-  
derator was about to dictate this to the Clerk, a Mem-  
ber, on second Thoughts, said, it was needless to insert  
that in their Minutes, because it would appear from  
reading them, that they had found nothing contrary  
to Scripture, &c. and he objected against the Word  
*Found*, as supposing they had considered the Letter  
with that View, and alledged they had only given  
their *Opinions*, but had not as yet given their *Votes* :  
And he being backed by some others, nothing was  
marked, but, " That the Presbytery refer unto their  
" Minutes, by reading whereof it will appear, that  
" they

" they have not passed Judgment upon any Proposition in the said Letter, whether it be agreeable to the Scriptures, Confession of Faith or Catechisms, or not." Then they referred the further Consideration of the Professor's Answers till they should obtain a Meeting in Conjunction with the Committee of Assembly, and appointed their Moderator to write to the Moderator of the said Committee, desiring him to call the said Committee to meet with them at *Glasgow*, in the Month of *February* then next, or as soon as they could.

Then the Presbytery resolved to proceed to make an Inquiry into the Things recommended to them by the Act of Assembly relating to the Professor's Affair, by taking a *Precognition of the Students of Divinity*; and the Professor craved that the Presbytery would proceed according to the *Form of Process*, Chap. 7. Sect. 3. and 8. printed *Page 47.* taking, as the Ground of their Inquiry, either a *fama clamosa*, all the Particulars whereof are to be put in his Hand, if not given to him already, before the said Inquiry be made: Or, with respect to all such Points, concerning which they do not instruct there is a *fama clamosa*, that, in that Case, the Presbytery make no Inquiry with respect to any Proposition of which he is not accused by some Person, who under his Hand gives in the Complaint, with some Account of its Probability, and undertakes to make out the Libel, under the Pain of being censured as a Slanderer: And that the Presbytery deliver to him in Writing such Proposition, or Propositions complained of, with the Complainant's Name and Designation, before taking such Precognition. And he further craved, that he might be advertised of any Meeting of the Presbytery, or any Committee appointed by it, and that he might be allowed to be present at any such Inquiry or Precognition.

The Presbytery resolved to begin by taking a *Precognition* of the Students, of what the Professor taught concerning the *Doctrine of the Holy Trinity*, and appointed four of their Number to take the said *Precognition*: But they refused to allow the Professor to be present thereat; which the Professor thought not reasonable, considering how necessary and expedient it would have been for expounding the Truth in a Case of this Nature, that proper Counter-queries should have been put to the Students by him; and that every Thing they said should have been fully and fairly set down; which, as he was afterwards informed, was not done, the Committee that took the *Precognition* having refused to mark several Things which the Students declared, that tended to *exculpate* the Professor, and give a just Representation of what he had taught upon these Heads.

The Committee for examining the Students met, and examined most of them that were in Town, before the 1st of February that the Presbytery met: But they did not then make their Report, alledging that all the Students were not as yet examined: Upon which they were enjoined to make all Dispatch. Yet they called none of the Students before them until the 15th of February, when the Presbytery again met: And the Report being called for, the former Excuse was again advanced, and their Moderator added, That some of the Students were in the Country, and they knew not if they were impowered to write to them without the Presbytery's Orders. The Professor alledged that this appeared to be a Shift, for that Difficulty was as discernable the preceeding Presbytery Day; and complained, that these Delays seemed to be made, to deprive him of Time to answer any thing that might occur in the Precognition against him, when the Committee of Assembly should meet. Nevertheless the Examination was protracted, and the Report put off till the

14th of *March*, which was the Day before the conjunct Meeting of the said Committee and Presbytery. And when the Report was taken in by the Presbytery, *the Professor was not allowed to be present, tho' he craved it;* But they referred the Precognition to the conjunct Meeting. And after they had been on their ordinary Business, one of the Elders asked if they had any more Business? And the Moderator said, Not: Upon which he and some others went out: But the rest of the Presbytery continuing to sit, a Member produced a Paper, called, *Remarks on the Professor's Answers to the Presbytery's References*, printed Page 130, which was read, and put into the Moderator's Hand, to be laid before the Committee of Assembly, in their conjunct Meeting with the Presbytery.

Upon the 15th of *March* 1727, the Committee of Assembly met in Conjunction with the Presbytery of *Glasgow*; and, after reading the Presbytery's *References*, and the Professor's *Answers*, the foresaid Paper of *Remarks* was offered to be read, and tho' the Professor objected against it, they proceeded to the Reading of it. Then the Professor craved that he should be allowed to see and answer it before they should give any Judgment concerning his *Answers to the Presbytery's References*. After which he having retired, the Committee agreed, that they were to consider the State of the Affair as it lay before the Presbytery, before the giving in of that Paper; and therefore it was not to be taken in as a Part of the Process. The Professor being called in, pleaded, that the said Paper being once read in open Court, without allowing him to see and answer it, could not fail to have as much Influence upon the Judgment of the Members, as if they had taken it in as a Part of the Process; and he protested against the Meeting, for not allowing him to see and answer the said Paper. After all, the Clerk was only allowed to give him a Double of it, if he required it. All this seem'd to the Professor

to be directly contrary to the Resolution of the Presbytery upon the 5th of January, when it was moved in the Presbytery to appoint a Committee to make *Remarks* upon the Professor's Answers to the Presbytery's *References*, it was rejected, because it would occasion a Multiplication of Papers, for that the Professor behoved to be allowed to see these *Remarks*, and to answer them.

The Professor likewise complained, in the same Meeting, that a Member of the Presbytery should be allowed to give in an Information against him, and thereby fist himself directly a Party, and yet, his Name being concealed, he should continue to sit and act the Part of Judge in the conjunct Meeting, and therefore craved, that the Name of the Author of that Paper might be known, and he laid aside from being a Judge in that Affair.

The Professor being ordered to remove, the *Precognition* was read in the Meeting, and a Committee was appointed to digest the material Articles in it, and to point out the Testimonies concerning those Articles, and bring in the same in Form at their Meeting Tomorrow.

The Professor having attended the said Meeting late in a very cold Night, he was taken so ill next Morning, that he was not able to attend the Meeting March 16: When the Report of the above-mentioned Committee was read, and some of the Articles of it being reasoned upon, the Meeting delayed the further Consideration of them till the Afternoon, and appointed One of their Number to acquaint Mr. Simson of what had been done.

In the Afternoon Mr. Simson's Indisposition continuing, he wrote a Letter of Excuse, printed Page 159. Then they proceeded further to consider the Report of the *Precognition* that had been taken by the Presbytery, and it was resolved that a Libel should be drawn up

against Mr. Simson, and that the Articles in the said Report should be the Ground of the same ; and they appointed a Committee to draw it up.

Thereafter they proceeded to consider the Presbytery's Questions and References, with the Professor's Answers to these References, and after much Reasoning upon them, they agreed, That what the Professor said on the first Five Queries, doth not remove the Grounds of Suspicion ; and they resolved at next Meeting to put these Queries to the Professor, and require a *direct, express and plain Answer to them*, and appointed One of their Number to intimate the same to the Professor.

But the Professor remaining ill, wrote a Letter to them at their next Meeting, *March 17*, printed Page 160. signifying, that it was not in his Power to give the Reverend Meeting the wished for Satisfaction.

The Meeting in the Afternoon, approved the Draught of the Libel to be given to the Professor ; and they gave it as their Advice to the Presbytery, that they require the Professor, *quamprimum*, to give a *direct, express and plain Answer to the Queries*, and if he refuse to answer, or give such Answers, as thereby it may appear to them that it is unsafe that he should Teach or Preach that they, in Virtue of the Power committed to them by the General Assembly, Suspend him in Terms of their Act ; and likewise, if either by his Refusal to answer, or giving such Answers as are dissatisfying, and therefrom further Ground of a Libel arise, that they add to the said Libel, as they shall see Cause.

Upon the 17th of March, the Presbytery appointed the Professor to give *direct, express and plain Answer* to their Five Queries, against their next Meeting, which was the 22d of March. At which Time the Professor not being able to attend them, sent a Paper to them called a *Representation* ; and the Consideration of it was delayed until the 29th of March, when the Professor gave in his Representation, as it is printed, Pag

35, which was read, and the Consideration of it delayed until next Day, and the Presbytery appointed the Libel to be got ready against the next Day.

Upon the 30th of March, the Professor's Representation was again read in the Presbytery, and they found the Matter of so great Importance, as to continue it to their further Consideration. Then they called for the Libel, which they had prepared; and the Professor craved, *imo*, That they might condescend upon the Passages in the Scriptures and our Confession of Faith and Catechisms, which they judged were opposite to each Article of the Libel, which the Presbytery of Glasgow had obliged Mr. Webster to do in a former Case. *2do*, That the Libel might be special as to Time and Place. *3to*, That the particular Witnesses be named, that are to prove the Articles of the Libel, which was also done in Mr. Webster's Case. *4to*, That the Students to be examined as Witnesses for Proof of the Libel, might be cited as Witnesses for his Exculpation, except such as he shall have Occasion to object against.

As to the first and second Demand, the Presbytery thought they could not alter the Libel, it being prepared in the conjunct Meeting. As to the third, they thought every Witness might be asked upon every Article of the Libel. And as to the last concerning *citing Witnesses for the Professor's Exculpation*, the Presbytery would consider that, when the Exculpation was pronounced and found relevant.

Then the Libel was judicially delivered by the Moderator to the Professor, and he was appointed to answer it against the 11th of April then next. It is printed in this Collection, *Page 41*.

Upon the said 11th of April, the Professor gave in general Objections against the Form of the Libel, which are printed in this Collection, *Page 48*. And they being read, the Professor and his Lawier were heard thereupon; then the Presbytery found there was no Weight

in the first Objection to invalidate the Libel. And as to the first Branch of the second Objection concerning the *Place*, they restricted it to the Bounds of the City or University of Glasgow. As to the second Branch concerning the *Time*, they found nothing in it to invalidate the Libel. As to the third and fourth Objections, they repelled them. As to the fifth they found the same did not render the Libel null, but that the Matter of it might be considered in its proper Time. And as to the sixth, they found it did not infer a Nullity in the Libel. But the Professor judging himself leased by these Interlocutors, protested against them.

Upon the 12th of April, the Professor was desired to give more special Answers to the Libel, and having demanded some more Time to do it, in respect of the Length, Intricacy and Importance of it; he was allowed until Tuesday then next, April 18.

Upon the 18th of April the Professor gave in his Answers and Defences, which are printed in this Collection, Page 52: and they having been read with the Libel, the Presbytery found the first Article not Relevant *per se* to infer Censure, but admitted it in Conjunction with the rest that might be found relevant. As to the 3d and 4th, they found them relevant, and admitted them to Probation. As to the 5th, they found it relevant; it being proven that he vented it as his own Opinion. As to the 6th, they found it relevant. As to the 7th, they found that the Professor owned by his Answers, that there are in the Deity three *Intelligent Agents*. The Consideration of which they reserved; and found the Professor's asserting that there are in the Deity three *Beings*, relevant. As to the 8th, They found it relevant in Conjunction with the other Articles. And the 2d they found it also relevant in Conjunction with the other Articles, and reserved the Consideration of what is contained in his Letter, upon that Subject, till the Probation be concluded. On the 19th

of

of April they found the 9th Article relevant. And as to the last Article, they found it, as joined with the other Parts of the Libel, relevant. And appointed Witnesses to be examined upon the whole Libel, in as far as it is not acknowledged by the Professor's Answers, Letters, or Writ under his Hand.

After the Presbytery had determined the Relevancy of the different Articles of the Libel, they proceeded to consider the Professor's *Exculpation* as laid in his Answers; which being reasoned upon, they call'd in the Professor, and asked him if he had any Thing more special to offer on his *Exculpation*, and he said he had something to add, and promised to give it in Writing against the Afternoon, which the Presbytery allowed him.

In the Afternoon the Professor gave in particular Grounds of Exculpation, which are printed in this Collection, *Page 73.* And these being read, the Presbytery found what was advanced in the first, second and third Paragraphs, not relevant to elide the Libel; but upon the whole found, that the Professor might Cross-question the Witnesses, and put such Queries to them, as the Presbytery shou'd think relevant and proper at the Examination. But the Professor judging himself leased by the said Interlocutors upon the Relevancy of the Libel, and repelling the Exculpation, protested against them: He thought it needless to ask again leave to cite Witnesses, the Presbytery having rejected his Exculpation; and as to the Parenthesis which is in the Minutes of this Afternoons Proceedings, *viz.* *And insisted not on any other Exculpation,* the Professor and his Lawier are positive that they did not hear it when the Interlocutor was read to them, otherwise they would have prevented its being put in the Presbytery's Records.

Thereafter several Witnesses were examined, whose Depositions are printed in this Collection, *Page 75, &c.* with an Abreviate of the Proof, digested according to  
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## P R E F A C E.

the different Articles of the Libel, both as to the Probation and Exculpation : Of the Fairness whereof any Person may judge by comparing it with the Depositions, *Page 98—110*. And some Observations upon the Proof, which were humbly submitted to the Judgment of the Venerable Assembly, and now printed in this Edition, *Page 110,—117*.

It was objected against James Sloss the first Witness, that he could not be received as a Witness, because in the publick Library of Glasgow, in the End of November or December 1725, he had in Conference with some of the Students, at the Time when the Library is kept open, said, *He heard the Professor teach some Things, that he thought were contrary to the Holy Scriptures, and our Confession of Faith*; and further he had ultroneously discovered his Testimony, before he was put upon Oath, which was a *proditio testimonii*; so that he was to be reckoned, not only an ultroneous Witness, but also was to be considered as the Raiser and Broacher of the *fama clamosa* against the Professor; but the Presbytery repelled this Objection.

The Presbytery had refused to allow the Professor to cite Witnesses in his Exculpation, till they should once see it and find it relevant: And they having repelled his Exculpation when given in, he could not cite Witnesses to prove what they had repelled; and was only allowed to cross-question the Witnesses that were cited for proving the Libel, and was limited to put such Questions only to them as the Presbytery should find relevant and proper at Examination.

The first Cross-question the Professor proposed to Mr. Sloss, was, *Whether he was teaching upon the Latin System or the Confession of Faith?* But the Presbytery would not allow him to ask it, saying it was an *en-snaring Question*. And when he proposed to ask the second Witness Mr. Ritchie, *Whether he had not heard him refute the Arian Heresy, and particularly that the Son*

Son of God was created or made? They would not allow it to be asked, but refused it by a Vote; upon which the Professor protested, and was not allowed to propose it to the first Ten Witnesses that were examined that Day and the next Day, April 2c. But upon the Tuesday the Week following, April 25. when examining the 11th Witness, they allowed it, and afterward allowed Mr. Ritchy the 2d Witness to be re-examined, whose second Deposition is printed betwixt the 16th Witness and the 17th.

When many Questions for his Exculpation were put to the Witnesses, the Presbytery refused to allow them to be asked: And when he begg'd of them that they would allow them to be ask'd; because he conceived that the Proof was not to be judged by the Presbytery, but to be transmitted to a Superior Judicature; and therefore he pleaded that he ought to be allowed to make his Exculpation full, that he might make the best Use of it he could when the Matter was laid before the General Assembly: This was refused, and the Questions several Times not allowed to be put; and this Reason was given for it, that it was against their Forms, and that they did not see what Part of the Libel the Proof of such a Question would elide.

April 26. the Presbytery having finished the taking of the Depositions, adjourned to the next Day Forenoon; but did not warn the Professor to be present, as they had been in use to do the preceeding Dyets.

April 27. the Professor sent a Friend in the Forenoon to see what the Presbytery was doing, and to know if he should wait upon them. They were at first upon their ordinary Business about planting vacant Congregations: And then, all being removed but Members, the Committee (which had been appointed April 13. to consider what is recommended by the Assembly in Mr. Simson's Affair further then the Presbytery have already gone upon, and to consider the Professor's

essor's Paper entitled *Representation*, and his Answer to the Presbytery's sixth Query, with the Paper of Remarks on the Professor's Answers to the References) gave in their Report. As to the first, they see nothing the Presbytery can now do further, the Assembly being so near. As to the second, the Committee gave in their Report in Writing, which the Presbytery approved, and appointed a Copy of it to be transmitted to the Moderator of the Committee for Purity of Doctrine; and allowed a Copy to the Professor if he called for it. (this Paper is printed Page 151, and the Answer to it Page 154). As to the 3d and 4th, the Committee was of Opinion, that the Paper of Remarks on the Professor's Answers to the References should be considered by the Presbytery, and, if they find the Remarks just, that they should approve of the Paper to be made use of in this Affair as may be needful: The Presbytery ordered the said Remarks to be read and approved of the same, and held it as their own Paper. This is the Paper which was read in the conjunct Meeting of the Committee and Presbytery, March 15: see Page xxiv above, it is printed in this Collection, Page 130. and the Answer to it, Page 138. Then the Presbytery appointed two of their Number, to review the Depositions of the Witnesses adduced in the Professor's Affair, and class them under proper Heads, and to report next Meeting.

April 27. Afternoon, the Committee having classed the Deposition of the Witnesses in Mr. Simson's Affair, brought in their Report in Writing: Which was read and put in the Hands of the Commissioners from the Presbytery to the Assembly. This Paper with two or three Remarks upon it, is printed Page 118—129. Then the Presbytery referred the whole Affair both as to the Queries and Libel to the ensuing Venerable Assembly to meet at Edinburgh, May 4. 1727.

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The Professor's Lawier and his Nephew were present in this Meeting when the classing of the Depositions was read, but heard nothing of the *N. B.* now printed at the End of it: Nor did the Professor know any Thing about it till he saw it in Print in *Edinburgh*; neither did he suspect that any of the Presbytery doubted of the Truth of his having proved that *Christ was a Necessary-being*, as he had said in his Answers, *Page 66.* otherwise he would have craved an Order to cite Witnesses of the Students, who, he knew, were present when he did it.

The Presbytery's Meeting in the Forenoon was with shut Doors, and their Proceedings were kept Secret from the Professor. For tho' it be in their Minute that the Professor is *allowed to have a Copy of the Report concerning the Representation if he call for it*, there was not the least Intimation made of what was done at that Meeting, either to his Lawier or Nephew who were present Afternoon, or to himself or any of his Friends afterwards: And he was in *Edinburgh*, and the Assembly was met, before he knew any Thing of the Report; or that the Presbytery had adopted, as their own Paper, the Remarks upon his Answers to the Presbytery's References, which the conjunct Meeting at *Glasgow, March 15.* had refused to allow him to see and answer. A Friend of his demanded an Extract of the Minutes of *April 27.* from the Presbytery-clerk on *May 2d*, but was refused it. And after the Assembly was up, and Mr. *Simson* had returned to *Glasgow*, the Clerk refused to give him an Extract, alledging he had no Orders for it; and when the Professor told him that one of the Members of Assembly for the Presbytery of *Glasgow* had declared before the Assembly, that he might have had Extracts, and that it was his own Fault if he wanted them; yet he said he could not give him it without an Order: However the next Day, when the Professor offered to instrument him if

he refused, he thought fit to give him an Extract of the Minute of the Presbytery, *April 27.*

THE General Assembly met on *Thursday May 4th*, and upon the 6th of *May* it was represented to the Assembly, by the Moderator of the Committee appointed by the last Assembly for Purity of Doctrine, that the said Committee's Report concerning Professor *Simson* was ready to be laid before the Assembly: And the Members from the Presbytery of *Glasgow* told, That an Extract of their Proceedings was also ready for them: Upon which the Assembly appointed two of their Number to inspect the Papers, and to report which of them were to be read before the Assembly. And upon the 8th of *May* these two Brethren, after having conversed with the Professor, reported that they were of Opinion, that the whole Papers relating to this Affair should be read: And this Diet, and the two Diets of *May* the 9th were spent in reading the same; and there being two Papers writ by the Presbytery of *Glasgow* against the Professor, mentioned in the Minute of *April 27th*, (see *Page xxxiii* above) the Professor represented, that he had not been acquainted of that Meeting, nor had ever got Extracts of the Presbytery's Procedure therein, and that he had never got any Opportunity as yet of answering these Papers, therefore he craved a competent Time for answering them, and the Assembly allowed him until *Thursday May 11th* in the Afternoon.

Upon the 11th of *May*, these two Papers of the Presbytery of *Glasgow* and the Professor's Answers to them were read: (they are printed in this Collection, *Page 130,—159.*) After which the Professor and the two Lawies that appear'd for him proposed a Declination against the Presbytery of *Glasgow*, upon Account of their Partiality, evidenc'd in their Management with Respect to the Professor during the Course  
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of this Process : Particularly their keeping of two clandestine Meetings, wherein they made up the above-mentioned two Papers against him, the first with a Design to prepossess the conjunct Meeting above-mentioned against him, and they seem to have had the same Design upon the Assembly, by the last Paper of the 27th of April ; their refusing him to be present at the Precognition that they took of the Students, their refusing to allow his Exculpation, their rejecting several Queries he put to the Witnesses, and several other irregular Steps they had made : But the Assembly was pleased to repel the Declinature. Therefore the Professor did plead, that if in this Assembly's Reasoning on his Case, any Expressions in his Papers, Pleadings, or in the Deposition of the Witnesses against him, should be censured as hetrodox or unsound, they would not proceed to give Judgment upon them, until he be heard and allowed to explain them fully, and give his own Meaning of them : And this he beg'd, because he is not conscious to himself that he has embraced any Opinion, or ever taught any Thing that's contrary to the Doctrines contained in the *Confession of Faith* and *Catechisms* of this Church. Then the Assembly appointed a Committee to bring in an Overture as to the Order and Method they should proceed in.

Upon the 12th, the said Committee gave in their Overture, that the Assembly should first consider the Libel ; wherefore they classed the Articles into distinct Heads, which they proposed to take in the Manner Professor Simson had divided the Libel in his Defences. And they thought the Assembly should consider the Articles severally, and hear the Professor on each Article, with Respect to the Relevancy and Proof both of Libel and Exculpation : And to begin with the second and third concerning the *Independency* and *Necessary-existence* of Christ.

The Assembly approved of this Overture. And, in the Afternoon, the Professor and his Council were heard on these two Articles. The Substance of whose Pleadings thereon are printed, *Page 162.* And, they being removed, there was a good Deal of Reasoning amongst the Members upon these Points; and there was a Reverend Brother who advanced some Things which gave Offence to many, having asserted, that *the Three Persons of the Blessed Trinity are as equal in their personal Properties, as in their essential Perfections.* Which People generally imputed to a Mistake proceeding from an Excess of Fervor in speaking; and at the same Time it shows how unreasonable it is to suspect a Man an Heretick upon Words once uttered, even in the most publick Assemblies: How easy it is to draw Heterodox Consequences from an unguarded Expression, will be evident from the Queries which were published next Day, and are printed, *Page 175.*

Upon the 13th, the Professor being informed, that some of the Brethren, in his Absence, had asserted the Night before that he had been condemned by the Assembly in the 1717 for *Arminianism*; he quarrelled the said Brethren before the Assembly, and openly vindicated himself by appealing to the Act of Assembly 1717; and this was marked in the Minutes, and read next Meeting.

Then the Assembly proceeded in their Reasonings upon the said Articles, and at length agreed first to determine the Relevancy of them: But the Members being of different Sentiments as to the State of the Question, the Assembly appointed a Committee to prepare an Overture about it.

Upon the 15th in the Morning, Professor Simson gave in a Paper upon the Relevancy of the 2d and 3d Articles (printed *Page 166.*) which, with the Acts of the Assembly therein referred to, were read,

Then

Then the Assembly caus'd read the Report of their Committee which they had appointed on Saturday. Which Report consisted of Four Heads, and the First of them, *viz.* Whether Professor Simson his denying the Necessary-existence of our Lord Jesus Christ, in teaching his Students, be an Article relevant to infer Censure or not? Being discoursed of, it was without a Vote agreed, that it was relevant. The Second Head, *viz.* Whether his teaching his Scholars, that the Necessary-existence of our Lord Jesus Christ was a Thing we know not, be relevant or not? Being reason'd on, the Assembly likewise sustain'd this relevant. And the Assembly having considered the Third Head, *viz.* Whether his teaching his Scholars, that the Independency of the Deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, is a Thing we know not, be relevant or not? They also found this Head relevant. Then the Fourth Head, to wit, Whether his teaching that these Terms, viz. Necessary-existence and Independency, were impertinent, and not to be used in talking of the Trinity, and that they were Philosophical Niceties we knew nothing about, be relevant or not? Being reasoned upon, the Assembly in like Manner sustain'd this Head relevant.

Then the Assembly resolv'd to consider the Professor's Articles of Exculpation, and in the Afternoon the Professor's Procurators were heard upon the Relevancy of the Professor's general and particular Grounds of Exculpation, whereof they complain'd that the Professor had never been allow'd to adduce any Proof: The Presbytery of Glasgow having repell'd his said Exculpation; and limited him to such Queries as they should think relevant and proper, at the Examination, by Way of Cross-question to the Witnesses. Their Pleading on this Head is printed, Page 168. After they had discoursed of the Relevancy of their Exculpation in general, there having, by good Providence, arisen from the Proof a great many Articles which tended towards the Professor's

sor's Exculpation, the Heads of the same were read as they were class'd by the Presbytery of *Glasgow*.

The Assembly, after much Reasoning upon the Exculpation, came at Length to this Resolution, that Professor *Simson*'s Grounds of Exculpation, advanc'd by him, and upon which Proof had been taken, were not sufficient to elide the Articles of the Libel found relevant against him: Reserving afterward to consider how far these Grounds of Exculpation may serve to alleviate.

Upon the Sixteenth in the Morning, the Professor and his Council were heard upon the Proof of the Four Heads found relevant by the Assembly, and their Pleadings thereon are printed, Page 176. Then the Assembly took the Proof of the First Head found relevant under their Consideration, and, after much Reasoning thereupon, they found it proven by a great Majority.

In the Afternoon, the Professor's Procurators represented to the Assembly, that they did not pass from their Demand of being yet allow'd a Proof of their general Grounds of Exculpation, which they conceiv'd were undoubtedly relevant to elide the whole Libel. The Members from the Presbytery of *Glasgow* represented that the Professor, after he had given in his general Grounds of Exculpation, did at a subsequent Diet give in his special Grounds, and did not insist on his former Demand; but ask'd all the Questions at the Witnesses adduc'd, which he thought might tend to his Exculpation: But the Professor reply'd, that he did never pass from his general Grounds of Exculpation, nor was it ever so much as asked at him, if he pass'd from them: His giving in more special Grounds, was in Deference to the Presbytery, who desired to know if he had any Thing more special to offer for his Exculpation, to which he said, he had something to add, and promised to give in the same in writing, as appears from the Presbytery's

ter's Minute April 19. *ante meridiem*; so that his giving in the said Paper in the Afternoon, was by no Means a passing from his general Exculpation: And these Words in the Presbytery's Minute, *and insisted not on any other Exculpation*, as they are only the Presbytery's Words and not the Professor's, and, so far as he remembers, were not in the Sentence that was intimated to him; so they do not necessarily imply a passing from his general Exculpation, but the plain Meaning of it is, that he offered no further Exculpation than what was already given in to the Assembly, *viz.* his general and particular Exculpations. The Assembly having considered what was represented, found no Reason for allowing the Proof demanded by the Professor, and therefore refused the same.

Then they proceeded to consider the Proof of the Second Head found relevant, and found the same proven by a great Plurality. Then the Assembly considered the Proof adduced upon the Third Head found relevant, but they unanimously found the same was not proven.

Upon the Seventeenth, the Fourth Head found relevant, was read, and the Depositions relating thereto: But the said Head consisting of several Points, the Proof whereof lay scatter'd thro' the Depositions of the Witnesses, they appointed Four of their Number to consider the Proof of it, and to bring in an Overture applying the Proof to the different Points of the whole Head.

And in the mean Time the Assembly proceeded to consider the Fourth Article of the Libel, *That the Professor in teaching gave it as his own Opinion, that the Three Persons of the Trinity are not to be said to be either Numerically or Specifically one in Substance or Essence, but added, that they were so the same, as to be one God in Three Persons, but gave not any Name to,*  
*nor*

## P R E F A C E.

nor attempted to give any Notion of that Sameness or Oneness. And because of the Affinity of the Fifth Article with this, the Assembly likewise took it in, which is, *That the Professor asserted that the Three Persons were all indeed one God, and had all the same Infinite Divine Perfections: And added that whether the Subject of these Perfections was different was a Metaphysical Question we need not determine.* And the Professor's Defences against these two Articles were read, and his Council was heard thereon, as their Pleading in Page 184 bears. Then the Assembly having reason'd much upon the Fourth Article, some Members proposed that a Committee should be nam'd to bring in an Overture for facilitating the Assembly's Procedure in this so important a Question, and others thinking it more expedient to come presently to some Determination therein, the Assembly did agree to put this Question, *Sustain this Fourth Article relevant, or commit the same to the Consideration of a Committee?* And it carried, *Sustain his teaching as his own Opinion, that the Three Persons of the Trinity are not to be said to be Numerically one in Substance or Essence,* relevant.

Upon the Eighteenth, the Committee named, the Day before, to bring in an Overture as to the Fourth Point found relevant upon the Second and Third Articles of the Libel, made their Report, which is as follows. "The Committee having read and considered  
 "the Depositions relating to the said Article, and  
 "Branches thereof, Find, First, That the Depositions  
 "of Mrs. William Brown, Number 6. of William  
 "Boyd, N. 9. Hamilton, N. 17. Ritchie, N. 2.  
 "Chapman, N. 22. and Stirling, N. 26. upon that  
 "Part of the Proposition concerning the Term *Inde-*  
*pendency* of our Lord Jesus Christ's Deity, that the  
 "said Term is impertinent and not fit to be used in  
 "speaking of the Trinity, do not prove the Point li-  
 "belled."

2dly,

2dly, " The Committee find, that the other Term Necessary-existence of our Lord Jesus Christ was impertinent and not to be used in speaking of the Trinity, proven, 1st, By the Deposition of Mr. William Brown, Number 6th, who depones that the Professor said this Term Necessary-existence of our Lord Jesus Christ was impertinent, and not at all to be used in speaking of the Trinity, or Words to that Purpose : 2dly, By the Deposition of Mr. William McClae, Number 20th, who depones that the Professor said the Term Necessary-existence, was not used in Scripture and was impertinent : 3dly, By the Deposition of Mr. Alexander Barr, Number 15th, who depones that the Professor said, when speaking of the Independence and Necessary-existence of our Lord Christ, that the Term Necessary-existence was a Term not proper or fit to be used when speaking of the Trinity.

3dly, " The Committee finds that the Term Necessary-existence was a Philosophical Nicety, deponed upon only by a single Witness, viz. By Mr. William Boyd, Number 9th ; and the other Witness adduced, viz. Mr. William Hamilton upon this Point is not positive."

The Assembly delayed the Consideration of this Matter, and appointed the Committee, which they had named upon the 11th current post meridiem in this Affair, to consider the whole of the Assembly's Proceedings in this Cause, both what is past and what is yet to be done, and to bring in an Overture thereupon.

In the Afternoon the Professor gave in a Paper for his Vindication, containing, briefly, his Sentiments upon the Subject of the Articles of the Libel that had been found relevant by the Assembly, printed Page 187, from which it will appear, that as the Professor is most Orthodox in his Opinion upon these Points, so there is

nothing therein but what is consistent with what he has more fully expressed in all his other Papers.

Mr. John Stirling, Principal of the College of Glasgow, caused read a Protest he had formerly taken before the Presbytery of Glasgow, *viz.*, "That tho' he owned "Church Judicatories had a Power to try a Professor "of Divinity upon an Accusation of Error; yet the "University of Glasgow being invested with a Power "to try and judge their own Members, he therefore "protested that the present Trial of Professor Simson "ought not to prejudge the University's Right." And the Principal declared his Adherence to the said Protestation, and thereupon took Instruments.

Then the last mentioned Committee gave in their Report, which was approven of, and the Assembly appointed a small Committee to draw up their Resolutions into the Form of an Act; and to name the Persons who were to be the Committee for Purity of Doctrine, which the Assembly had resolved to appoint, and the said Act being accordingly prepared, was approven of. It is printed *Page 188.*

Upon the 19th the Assembly's Act was intimated to Professor Simson, and he shewed his Willingness to obey the Assembly's Appointments, and expressed himself to this Purpose.

Moderator I think it my Duty to reverence the Holy Hand of God in this Step of his Providence toward me; I have been cast on the Care of our gracious God, and have endeavoured to observe his various Ways of dealing with me, and to commit my self and all my Concerns to his merciful Conduct and wise Disposal, who has always done what was best, and performed all Things graciously for me: I desire therefore, by his Grace, patiently and quietly to submit to his blessed Will in this Dispensation of his holy Providence.

I have always wished for, and to my Power endeavoured the Peace and Prosperity of the Church of Scotland. And will still earnestly pray for and seek her Peace and Welfare; and if I cannot live in this Church without being a Bone of Contention, I will much rather leave it, and heartily pray that Peace with Truth and Righteousness may be promoted in it.



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## ERRATA.

Page 2. Line 2. for *have I*, read *I have*. p. 11. l. 25. dele  
and. p. 13. l. 30. *who*, r. *tho'*. p. 18. l. 17. *same*, r.  
*the same*. p. 39. l. 28. *proceeding*, r. *preceeding*. p. 50. last  
l. *an*, r. and. p. 59. l. 20. *infinite Perfections*, r. *infinite Di-*  
*vine Perfections*. p. 68. l. 17. *needful*, r. *needleſſ*. p. 72. l.  
40. *the Words*, r. *any* shall be *positive the Words*. p. 142. l.  
22. Page 9. r. 133. p. 145. l. 37. after assert, shoule be, &c.  
and what follows, *The Meaning*, &c. is the Answer, and not  
a part of the Remark. p. 168. l. 16. *nſe*, r. *case*. p. 176. l.  
5. *from the Foot* dele it.



## Mr. SIMSON's Letter to the Presbytery of Glasgow.

V. R. and D. B.



T has been no small Uneasiness to me, that I have been deprived of the Comfort and Advantage of attending your Meetings in Presbytery this Winter, thro' bodily Indisposition, wherewith a Holy and Righteous God hath thought fit to exercise me; at some Times measuring out to me very sharp Affliction, yet in his infinite Mercy, at other Times, intermixing his fatherly Compassion, and great Kindness in granting me Respite

and Ease, both as to Body and Mind, (without which I could not have lived till now) which undeserved Favour I desire thankfully to acknowledge and remember to the Praise of his free Grace, through Jesus Christ our Lord. But what has been most grievous to my Spirit, and has added great Affliction to the afflicted, is a Load of Calumny thrown upon me by false Reports spread Abroad far and near, of my having taught *Heresy*, or *Gross Errors* concerning the Doctrine of the *Holy Trinity*; which might have been prevented, or long since wiped off, had I been in ordinary Health, or able to attend your Meetings.

I have been informed by my Brethren, Mrs. Scot and *Maurin*, that you desire to know what I have taught this Win-

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ter on that Subject, about which so great Noise has been made: This Favour have I granted to any Brother that asked it. I do therefore chearfully embrace this Opportunity of giving you a free and ingenuous Account of it, which I judge necessary for your Satisfaction, and for the Vindication of my self, and of the Society whereof I am a Member, and of the Students under my Inspection, and likewise for preventing unjust Reflections on my Reverend Brethren of the Presbytery.

Since I had the Honour to teach Divinity here, I have yearly explained Professor *Mark's* little Compend, called his *Medula*, and also some Chapters of Professor *Pitton's* little Compend, and among others that of the Doctrine of the Trinity; together with these I yearly read over, and explain our *Confession of Faith*, and compare the feveral Articles of it, with what is taught in the *Latin Systems*, some Mistakes in which I had Reason to correct, by what is more clearly and exactly taught in our *Confession*. Accordingly this Winter, in teaching the Doctrine of *God*, and of the *Holy Trinity*, I did in Course read and explain the second Chapter of our *Confession of Faith*.

In my Entry on this Subject, I took Pains to teach the Students, the Scripture Notion and Character of the true God, whereby he is distinguished from all false Gods whatsoever; The first Part of which is his being the *Creator* of the World, whereby he makes known to Mankind, and all other reasonable Creatures, his Eternal Power and Godhead: The other Part of this Character is, That being the *Creator* of the World, he becomes necessarily the absolute Lord and Proprietor of all his Creatures, and the supreme Governor of all of them endowed with Reason. By which he makes known all his glorious Perfections that shine forth in the Works of Creation and Providence, as *Moses* does in the most clear and effectual Manner describe the true God, in the first three Chapters of *Genesis*, which contain the most suitable Preface imaginable, to the following Revelation of God's Will to Mankind, recorded in the Books of the *Old* and *New Testament*, from which *Holy Oracles* we learn the glorious Perfections of God, which shine forth in the Work of fallen Man's Redemption, together with a more full and just Account of his Perfections discoverable by the Works of Creation and Providence, than Man in his corrupt State could attain to by the meer Light of Nature; of which Divine Perfections we have an excellent Sum in the first and second Sections of the said Chapter of our *Confession*.

This Character which *Moses* gives of the true God, is often briefly repeated and referred to in many Places, both of the *Old* and *New Testament*; in giving Instances whereof I took Notice, That the Apostle *John* having said, That the *Word* or *Son* was God, proves the Truth of it by the same Argument used by *Moses*, to prove that the *God of Israel* was the true God;

God; namely, That all Things were made by him, and without him was not any Thing made, that was made. And that the World was made by him, John i. 1, 3, 10.

From this Scripture Character of the true God, I refuted the Notion of Dr. Clark, and others, who by true God understand any Person who has truly *Spiritual Domination*. In the next Place, I proved that there is and can be but one God, both according to the Light of Nature and Revelation; but yet (according to what is well taught in the Third Section of the said Chapter) that in the *Unity* of the *Godhead* there be Three Persons, *God the Father*, &c. who are distinguished by their *personal Properties* thereinmentioned. The Nature and Incommunicableness of which do equally prove the real Distinction of the Persons, and the *Oneness* of their *Godhead*. For the *Father* is of *None*, neither begotten nor proceeding, and begets the *Son*; the *Son* is eternally begotten of the *Father*; the *Holy Ghost* eternally proceeding from the *Father* and the *Son*: And the Property of each Person is incommunicable to either of the other two, as is owned by all sound Divines. e. g. The *personal Property* of the *Father* cannot be truly affirmed of the *Son*, by whatever Expressions or Words it be done. For it would be the same as to say, The *Son* is of *None*, he is not begotten of the *Father*, but begets the *Father*, which manifestly contradicts the express Words of our Confession, and of the Holy Scriptures, and what our Divines commonly teach according to them: The same holds true of the *personal Properties* of the *Son* and *Holy Ghost*. I also, by the Way, took Notice, that the *Father's* being of *None*, is the same that many Authors understand by being *Self-existent*, taken not absurdly in the positive Sense, but in the *Negative*; meaning, That he has his *Being* and *Godhead* of *None*; so that he has not only Life in himself, but has it from no other Person or *Being* whatsoever. I further observed, That the *Father*, in begetting his only *Son*, has from Eternity communicated to him the *Divine Perfections* that he has originally in himself, whereby he has given to the *Son* to have Life in himself; as our Lord declares, John v. 26. Which Words are cited, Section 2d of the said Chapter of our *Confession*, to prove that God hath all Life in himself. And as this proves that the *Son* hath Life in himself, as well as the *Father*, namely, That he is *Infinite*, *Eternal* and *Unchangeable*, in his *Wisdom*, *Power*, *Holiness*, *Justice*, *Goodness*, &c. so they expressly prove that the *Son* hath this Life of the *Father*, who gives or communicates it to him, which he does in his *Eternal Generation*. Then I shewed that the *Divine Perfections* are communicated to the *Holy Ghost* by his eternally proceeding from the *Father* and the *Son*: From all which I proved, that the *Son* and *Holy Ghost*, tho' distinct Persons from the *Father*, and each of them God, yet they could not be different

ferent Gods from him, it being the same Divinity which is originally in the Father, that is eternally communicated to them, which Communication would be impossible, unless they were Persons truly distinct from the Father, as is plain from the *personal Properties* of all the Three Persons compared together; from the Nature of which I think it evident, That the Son and Holy Ghost must needs be one God with the Father, and also Persons distinct from him, and likewise that these *Properties* are the Foundation of their mutual Relations, and of the Order of their *Being* and *Working*.

Moreover, that I might shew the Students the Agreement between the Doctrine taught in our Confession, and that of the ancient Christian Church, I repeated the Articles of the *Nicen Creed* relating to this Subject, and refuted all the Branches of the *Arian Heresy* therein condemned, and confirmed the Truth of the Catholick Doctrine opposed thereunto: On the other Hand, I refuted the old *Sabellian* and present *Socinian* Heresies, which agree in Substance, tho' they differ in Circumstances, and Modes of Explication of no great Moment; as to which some of both these Sects did of old, and do still differ among themselves. And that I might give the Students yet a fuller View of this important Article, I read to them what Bishop *Pearson*, an approved Author, writes concerning the *personal Properties* of the Father and Son in his Exposition of the Creed, Page 40. Edit. 4th. and recommended the whole Book to their Perusal, especially what relates to the *Trinity*. Afterwards I taught, That altho' the Divine Persons be thus distinguished by their *personal Properties*, yet with Respect to their *Essential Perfections* they are equal, the Scripture ascribing to the *Son* and *Holy Ghost* such Names, Attributes, Works and Worship, as are proper to God only; which I explained and proved at large in teaching that Part of the *Confession*, and of the *Latin System* which treats of that Subject.

This, to the best of my Memory and Judgment, on careful Reflection, is what I taught at several Times this Winter concerning the High and Important Doctrine of the *Holy Trinity*, on which the chief Articles of our Holy Religion are founded: And this Doctrine being discovered to us in the Holy Scriptures alone, and well summed up in the 3d Section of the said Chap. of our *Confession*, and in the *Larger Catechism*, Quest. 9, 10, 11. I took all possible Care to keep clos by the Expressions used in Scripture and our *Confession*, being sensible of the Danger of essaying to be wise above what is written, in teaching a Doctrine so far above our Comprehension, and which we can know nothing of by the Light of Nature.

When I compare what I have taught with the scandalous Reports spread abroad, which I have got Notice of (as mentioned above) they all seem to have arisen from absurd Consequences,

drawn from what I said concerning the *personal Properties* of the Divine Persons, concerning their being Incommunicable, and founding a real Distinction of the Persons; all which Consequences, and others of the like Nature, may with equal Reason be drawn from the express Words of our *Confession*, which I took in their literal Sense, and told the Students they were fitter to express that Doctrine, than any other I could use in their Place. Whence it is obvious, that the same Reports may with equal Justice be spread and objected against the Compilers of our *Confession*, and all the Members of this Church, who have signed it as the Confession of their Faith. In like Manner, both the *Sabellians* and *Arians* did of old raise the same and the like Objections against the Catholick Doctrine, especially against the *Nicen Creed*, and persecuted the Professors of it, with the same or the like Reproaches and Calumnies.

The Unreasonableness and Falshood of the Calumnies thrown upon me, I shall make evident, by considering all the false Reports that are come to my Hand. I shall begin with that, *Christus non est summus Deus*; And when I had read in *Pictet*, *Christus est summus Deus*, I said it was to be understood *cum grano salis*, tho' I do not remember that I then used that Expression, yet I think 'tis probable I might, because I often use it on the like Occasion; namely, when a Term is not to be taken in the greatest Latitude, wherein it is used by some Authors. Yet I remember I said, if the Words, *summus Deus*, were taken in such Latitude, as to include the Father's *personal Property*, as they are by some Authors, they could not in that Sense be truly affirmed of the Son: But if meant of Christ's being Creator and Sovereign Governor of the World, or of the essential Properties that are common to the Father and the Son, then they would truly agree to him; and told them that *Pictet* manifestly took them in this Sense, according to which all his Arguments were conclusive, which I shewed in the particular Explication of them: So that the other Report of my endeavouring to refute *Pictet's* Arguments for the *Equality* of the Son with the Father, is a gross Falshood, and contrary to what was Fact, as is likewise that other Report, *Filius non est equalis Patri*, the contrary of which I proved at large, as is mentioned above, tho' I taught that the Father's *personal Properties* did not agree to him.

As to that Report, *Christus non est ens necessarium*, there being no Mention thereof either in the Holy Scripture or our *Confession of Faith*, or in the *System* I teach, it never came in my Thoughts to mention it, either in teaching or preaching; as little did I mention in teaching the Word *Independens*, for the same Reason: But on a Student's proposing an Objection, wherein he mentioned the Words *Dependent* and *Independent*; I answered, That the Words *Dependent* and *Independent*, *Co-ordinate*

ordinate and Subordinate, were never in Scripture or our Confession of Faith applied to the personal Properties and Relations of the Divine Persons, nor could we safely and pertinently apply them so, because they are ordinarily used with Respect to Creatures, in a Sense not applicable to the Persons of the Glorious Godhead; yet all are agreed, that if the Words Independent and Necessary-existent, be taken in a Sense that includes the personal Property of the Father, they cannot be applied to the Son; but if said of him in any Sense consistent with the personal Properties of the Father and the Son, they will no doubt agree to him.

As to that Text, John xvii. 3. where our Lord, praying to his Father, calls him, *The only true God*, when that Phrase, *the only true God*, is taken in a Sense that includes the Father's personal Property, it cannot in that Sense be applied to the Son, but only to the Father, in which Sense it was taken by many of the Ancients, such as *Athanasius* and others, who were the most zealous Opposers, both of the *Arian* and *Sabellian* Heresies, as it is also by Bp. *Pearson* in the forecited Place, and by Bp. *Bull* in several Places of his *Defensio Fidei Nicenæ*, and by other approved Divines.

Thus I have freely laid before my Reverend Brethren a faithful Account of what I have taught concerning the Doctrine of the *Holy Trinity*, together with *Answers* to the calumnious Reports that have been spread of me, which in my Apprehension make it evident, that they are false and unjust; and I persuade my self, if both Parts of the *Letter* do not fully satisfie you, as I would fain hope they will both you and others, yet you will at least find nothing in either Part that is different from, much less that is inconsistent with the Doctrine of the *Holy Scriptures*, and of our *Confession of Faith*, unless my Words be strained to another Sense than I take them in, and which, according to their common Use, I think they cannot bear. But being sensible from long Experience, that I may be mistaken when I think I am in the Right, if there be any Mistakes in this, I shall reckon it a Favour to have them discovered, and as soon as I am convinced of them, I shall chearfully correct them.

It is with great Difficulty that I have got this Line wrote to you under my extream bodily Weakness, to which a long continued Disease hath brought me, which renders me incapable of thinking on any Subject so closely and distinctly as I used to do when in Health, much more on so sublime and nice a Subject as this is. I earnestly beg and expect your Brotherly Sympathy, and Assistance of your Prayers at the Throne of Grace, that our Gracious God may sanctify my Affliction, and guide me into all Truth by his holy and unerring Spirit, and help me to serve him faithfully and diligently while he has Use for me

on Earth, and may perfect a Work of Grace in me, and guide me with his Counsel while here, and afterward receive me into his Glory, through our Blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Commending you and your Labours to the Riches of his Grace and effectual Blessing ; I am,

*V. R. and D. B.*

*Your most affectionate Brother, and humble Servant,*

Glasgow, March 2d, 1726.

JOHN SIMSON.

P. S. I desire this may be read in full Presbytery, and that the Students may be present.

## OVERTURE by Way of Act, for preserving Purity of Doctrine.

*Edinburgh, May 17. 1726.*

THE General Assembly considering, that several Presbyteries have instructed their Commissioners to propose, that Inquiry be made into the Grounds of some Reports of unsound Doctrine, concerning the Persons of the *Blessed Trinity* being taught at *Glasgow*, and that their Committee for Instructions, having called their Brethren Commissioners from the Presbytery of *Glasgow*, to give them an Account what they knew about these Reports, and what they had done about the same ; these Brethren answered, That upon some Surmises of Mr. *John Simson*, Professor of Divinity in *Glasgow*, his having taught erroneous Doctrine, particularly with Respect to the *Blessed Trinity*, the Presbytery of *Glasgow* had sent Two of their Number, to converse him thereupon : That he had sent to the Presbytery a Letter owning, that there were such Reports, but that they were false and calumnious, and giving an Account of what he said he taught on that Article ; and that the Presbytery had appointed a Committee of their Number to consider his said Letter, but that their Committee had not yet made Report unto the Presbytery ; and the General Assembly being zealously concerned for the Preservation of Purity of Doctrine in this Church, and for preventing the Entry and Spreading of any Error, especially in such a weighty and fundamental Article: Do therefore recommend to, and appoint the Presbytery of *Glasgow* to proceed with all Diligence in their Inquiry into Mr. *Simson's* Opinions concerning the Doctrine of the *Holy Trinity*, and particularly as to the Passages and Expressions relative thereto, contained in his Letter to them, or other Papers written

ten by him ; and also, that they make Inquiry unto what he taught or vented concerning the Trinity ; and also how he has obeyed the Injunctions of the General Assembly in anno 1717, as to the Points which they had then prohibited him to teach ; and further, if they shall see Ground to suspect him to be unsound in any other Article of our Confession of Faith, they shall likewise make Inquiry into his Opinion and Sentiments concerning the same. And for the Help and Assistance of the said Presbytery in these Matters, the General Assembly do hereby Nominate and Appoint the Reverend Messrs. **William Mitchel**, one of the Ministers of Edinburgh, **James Haddow** Principal of the new College of St. Andrews, **Allan Logan** of Culross, **William Wishart** Principal of the University of Edinburgh, **William Hamilton** Professor of Divinity there, **James Craig** Minister at Edinburgh, **James Ballantyne** there, **James Smith** at Cramond, **James Alston** at Dirleton, **William M George** at Pennycock, **John Brand** at Borrowstounness, **Michael Potter** at Kippen, **John Hunter** at Air, **Hugh Fauside** at Loudoun, **Robert Wodrow** at Eastwood, **Thomas Linnen** at Lesmahago, **John Curry** at Old Monkland, and **James Bane** at Bonehill, Ministers ; the Right Honourable Sir **Hugh Dalrymple** of North Berwick Lord President of the Session, **Adam Cockburn** of Grange, **James Lord Justice Clerk**, Mr. **James Erskine** of Grange, Mr. **James Hamilton** of Pancaitland, Sir **Walter Pringle** of Newbal, Senators of the College of Justice, Sir **James Stewart** of Goodtrees Baronet, and Mr. **Robert Dundas** of Arniston younger, Ruling-Elders ; to be a select Committee, and 13 of them to be a Quorum, whereof Nine are always to be Ministers ; and that their first Meeting shall be in the old Church Isle of Edinburgh, upon the next Day after dissolving of this present Assembly, at Nine of the Clock in the Forenoon, and that subsequent Meetings be upon *Tuesday* before each ordinary Meeting of the Commission of the General Assembly, at Four of the Clock in the Afternoon, with full Power to them to choose their own Moderator and Clerk ; that they give Advice and Direction in these Affairs to the Presbytery, as they shall be applied to for the same, and that the Presbytery shall send an Account of the Steps of their Procedure to the several Meetings of this Committee, that are or shall be afterwards appointed, that they may give Advice and Direction as the Case shall require, that the Moderator of the Committee shall correspond with the Presbytery, and is hereby impowered to call Meetings of the said Committee *pro re nata*, as he shall be advised by the said Presbytery, or as Occasion shall require ; and hereby gives full Power to the said Committee, to adjourn to such Times and Places as they shall see Cause ; and also to meet and join with the Presbytery, in the Trial of the Affairs recommended to them ; but that neither Committee nor Presbytery, jointly or separately

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rately, shall pass a Judgment, either absolving or condemning Mr. Simson, but shall only prepare this Affair by all proper Ways of Inquiry, and proceed, *usque ad sententiam*, and then report their Diligence to the next General Assembly. Yet, if Mr. Simson shall refuse or decline to answer Questions that shall be proposed to him by the said Presbytery or Committee, and conform to the Direction of this Act, or, if he shall give such Answers, or behave himself so with Relation to the Premisses, as that it shall appear to them to be unsafe to the Church of GOD, that he continue to teach or preach; in any of these Cases, the Presbytery, or Presbytery and Committee, are impowered to suspend him till the next Meeting of the General Assembly. And the General Assembly appoint, that the select Committee, at their Meeting in March next, shall order an Abstract of their Procedure to be sent to the several Synods in this Church, and that in all their Actings the Presbytery and Committee be careful to proceed according to the Word of GOD, and the Confession of Faith, and the Larger and Shorter Catechisms of this Church founded thereupon; and they are not to insist upon any Article not contained therein, extracted by

JO. DUNDAS. CLS ESTL. SCOT.

Glasgow August 2d, 1726.

THE Presbytery of Glasgow having read the following Questions over one by one, and being separately considered one after another, they approved them, and appointed their Moderator to deliver an Extract of this Day's Procedure, containing the saids Questions; to Professor Simson, desiring him, in the Presbytery's Name, to give his Answers thereto, to the Presbytery with his first Conveniency.

## QUESTIONS.

I. Whether are there Three distinct Substances in the Three Persons of the Godhead, or is it one and the same Numerical Substance that is in them all?

II. Whether is the Son Necessarily-existent, in the ordinary sense of the Word, so that it is impossible that he should not have been?

III. Whether is the Deity of the Son and Holy Ghost Self-existent and Independent?

IV. Is this Title, THE MOST HIGH GOD, in the highest Sense used in Scripture due to Christ, as he is God?

V. Whether is it agreeable to Scripture and the Confession of Faith,

to ascribe to the Father that Title, THE ONLY TRUE GOD, in such a Sense, as it cannot be affirmed of the Son and Holy Ghost?

VI. The Presbytery desires to know, why the Professor, in teaching the Doctrine of the Trinity, has not mentioned the Terms INDEPENDENT, DEPENDENT and SUBORDINATE, seeing Adversaries of the Truth assert the Dependence of the Son, and his Subordination, as to his Divinity, to the Father: And there seems to be as much Need as ever to caution Students against this Subordination and Dependence?



### Professor Simson's Letter to the Presbytery of Glasgow, October 12. 1726.

Professor Simson being indisposed, and not able to attend the Presbytery of Glasgow, sent them the following Letter, directed thus, To the V. R. Moderator, and remanent Members of the Presbytery of Glasgow. V. R. D. B. You no doubt remember, That upon the 16th of February last, when I was confined to my Chamber by a very afflicting Disease, Mr. Charles Coats, Minister at Govan (without speaking a Word before to me on the Subject) did lay before you an Information against me, of several Gross Errors, he said, he heard I should have taught on the Subject of the Holy Trinity; whereupon you appointed a Committee to confer with me that Afternoon, upon the Particulars of that Information, which one of the Members of the Committee got a written Note of. When I was told by one of your Members, there had been such an Information given in, and a Committee appointed to confer with me, I found my self obliged to decline such a Conference, being utterly unable for it in these Circumstances, and knowing from Experience they are more ready to create than remove Mistakes, but choosed rather to write my Mind to you about the Particulars informed against me, as soon as I should be able to do it, after having got a Copy of them, which accordingly I received from Mr. John McLaurin, one of the Ministers of Glasgow, about a Week after that, and found all the Particulars were perfectly new to me, except that one, about the Terms, *Summus Deus* being taken *cum grano salis* when applied to Christ; and being forward to give all possible Satisfaction to my Reverend Brethren, I sent you a Letter of the 2d March thereafter, containing a full Account of what I owned and taught on the Subject of the Holy Trinity, and answered the Reports objected to me, and desired it

as a Favour, that you would discover to me any Mistakes you should find in it, that upon being convinced of them, I might correct them. To which Letter I have not been favoured with any Return, nor have I heard so much as by Report, that you have found Fault with any Proposition in it, during the Space of more than seven Months, that are now elapsed, since you received it; but an Extract of a Minute of your Proceedings the second of August last, was delivered to me in your Name by the said Mr. M<sup>r</sup>. Laurin, which had I not thus received, how should I have known from any Thing in the Minute that I was the Professor concerned in it, seeing it contains neither my Name nor Designation, either in the Title or Body of it. I found Six Questions inserted therein, which the Presbytery desires the Professor to give Answers to, with his first Conveniency: The last of them seems to relate to a Passage of my said Letter, which I think contains a plain Answer to that Question, and a sufficient Caution to the Students; but when you shall be pleased to let me know, what are the Defects thereof, I shall endeavour to give you what further Satisfaction I can about it. As to the other Questions, so far as I perceive, they have no Relation to that Letter of mine, which contains what I own and teach concerning the Blessed Trinity, according to the Holy Scriptures, and the express Words of our Confession of Faith, which I having signed oftner than once, and do still adhere to; so that if you mean by these Questions, to express nothing else, but what is said in our Confession, I humbly conceive, without any Reflection on you, that the Words chosen by the Venerable Assembly at Westminister, are fitter to express that Doctrine, than these made use of in your Questions: But if by your Questions you mean something else than what is taught in our Confession, I do not see what Concern my Letter or I have with them, until I be better informed. I must also acquaint you, That by the narrowest Search made into your Minutes, I could not find any Thing to let me know your Design, in desiring me to answer these Questions; as whether it were to have my Assistance in determining some new Articles of Faith, or in answering some Difficulties on that Subject, or for any other End; neither does it contain any Reasons why you desire me to answer these Questions more than any other Professor, or any other Man; all which make your Minute very Mysterious to me, who am a great Stranger to your Affairs, having been, as you may know, in no Condition to attend any of your Meetings this whole last Year, and but very few of them for more than a Year before that, and since February last your Management seems to have been designedly kept secret from me; wherefore I have thought it most prudent to delay the Consideration of these Questions, until you should be pleased

ed to let me know plainly and exprely for what End and Reasons you have desired me to answer them, lest by guessing at them, from uncertain Reports, or gathering them by remote and doubtful Consequences, I might fall into a Mistake of your Meaning, and be thereby led to say Things that might be mistaken by you, which from the Respect I have to you, and to the Peace of the Church, I think my self obliged by all Means to avoid. I pray our Blessed Lord may countenance and assist you in all the Parts of his Work among your Hands, and guide both you and me into the Paths of Truth and Righteousness, which are the only Ways to solid Peace. I am,

R. D. B.

*Your Affectionate Brother, and humble Servant in the Lord,*

Glasgow, October 12th, 1726.

JOHN SIMSON.

After Reading the said Letter, the Presbytery delayed the Consideration of it till the first *Wednesday* of *November* next; and in the mean Time declare, they had no other Design or Meaning by proposing the Queries that have been given to Professor *Simson* to anwer, but what the *Act* of the last General Assembly concerning him bears, to wit, To understand his Opinion and Sentiments concerning the Doctrine of the *Holy Trinity*, and particularly as to the Passages and Expressions relative thereto, contained in his Letter to them ; and appoint their Clerk to deliver an Extract of this Day's Proceedings to the said Professor ; and also appoint their Moderator to write a Letter to the Moderator of the Committee for preserving the Purity of Doctrine, and therein to transmit a Copy of the above Letter from the said Professor, with an Extract of the Presbytery's Proceedings in the said Professor's Affair, from the 7th of September last to this Day *inclusive*.



### *Professor SIMSON's Letter to the Committee for Purity of Doctrine.*

*V. R. and D. B.*

**W**HEN you compare the Minute of the Presbytery of Glasgow, of the 2d of August last, with the Letter I wrote to them, on the 12th of October thereafter, which I understand are transmitted unto you, I hope you will be satisfied, that I had sufficient Reason to delay the Consideration of the Questions, they desired me to answer by the said Minute, seeing it does not contain the least Hint for what End or Reasons they

they desire me to answer them ; and tho' I might have guessed they were proceeding with me according to the Method of *Inquisition*, yet the Respect I have for them, engaged me to mention any other possible Reason, for their desiring me to answer these Questions, rather than insinuate they were taking so wrong a Way : And altho', by the Declaration in their Minute of *October 12th*, they made it pretty plain, they were proceeding in that Way ; yet, that I might have an Occasion of understanding their Mind plainly, and have Access to lay before them in the most inoffensive and modest Way the Reasons that persuad-ed me, that the Method they seemed to be then following, and also the Questions they had propounded to me, were contrary to the Direction of the Act of the last General Assembly con-cerning me ; I waited on them at their Meeting on *Wednesday* last, the *2d of November* current ; and when I was asked by the Moderator, if I was satisfied with the Declaration of their Mind contained in their Minute of *October 12th*, and was then ready to give my Answers to the Questions they had proposed to me. I answered, That I was not satisfied with it, and wan-  
ted to have their Answer to a Question or Two, that I humbly craved Liberty to propose to them for further clearing my Mind in that Affair. Upon which the Presbytery seeming willing to hear what I had to offer, I first proposed this Question, Whether they thought themselves impowered by the last General Assem-bly's Act about me, to require my private Thoughts on any Point of Divinity ? And gave them my Reasons why I thought they were not so impowered, namely, because it was contrary to the Example of our Blessed Lord himself, who refused to submit to the Method of Inquisition, even with respect to the Doctrine he had taught, who when accused of calling himself the *Messiah* or *Christ*, and a *King*, his Answer to that Charge was required ; he confessed the former Article before the Council of the *Jews*, and the other before *Pilate*. It was also contrary to the Apostle's Rule, *Against an Elder receive not an Accusation, but before two or three Witnesses* : Which Negative Law makes it evident, that no other Sort of Accusation, was a sufficient Ground for any Church, or its Judicatures, to entertain Suspicions of any Thing scandalous in a Church Officer. Moreover, such a Power is contrary to the good Rules of Discipline established by this Church in the *Form of Process*, which by the Act of the last Assembly, are neither abrogated, nor so much as suspended, with respect to my Case. It is likewise contrary to the *Claim of Right*, and the Privileges of every free-born Subject in the Kingdom, and was one of the oppressive Methods made use of, before the late happy *Revolution*, against which we are secured by the said *Claim of Right*. It is also manifest, that the Me-thod of Inquisition is one of the most mischievous Engines of Popery. From all which I concluded, that it was not to be

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presumed, that the said Act of Assembly gave the Presbytery any such Power, unless it had been expressly delivered in the plainest Terms : Whereas it is evident the Act says no such Thing. To these I further added, That on the contrary, the said Act of Assembly does expressly enjoin this Presbytery, and their own Committee, *to proceed by all proper Ways of Inquiry* ; and I am yet to learn, what proper Ways of Inquiry for trying and issuing Scandals, are established in this Church, except these contained in the *Form of Process*, which are framed according to the Rules of the Gospel, to common Equity, to our Protestant Principles, and to our Civil Rights and Privileges, as free Subjects. But if this Method of *Inquisition* be set up for trying and issuing Scandals, we may burn our *Form of Process* with respect to Ministers at least. Wherefore I was fully satisfied in my own Mind, that the last Assembly, by their said Act, had given the Presbytery of Glasgow no such Power. Then the Moderator (after causing read the said Act of Assembly) asked the Opinion of all the Members present, upon the Question ; and all, except Three, said, *They thought they were empowered to ask my private Thoughts*: And some of them alledged, as a Proof of it, *That they were empowered to suspend me, if I should refuse or decline to answer the Questions they proposed to me.* But I replied, *It was Questions proposed according to the Direction of this Act*, as is therein expressed ; which Questions should therefore be according to the *Form of Process* ; and the adding so heavy a Penalty, that does not only affect me, and my Character and Office, but also those who may receive Benefit by my exercising my Office, is to me a strong Argument, that the Act of the Assembly gave the Presbytery no such Power, the inflicting such a Penalty being manifestly Unjust, unless I should transgress *some known and standing Rules*. And when I found that it was the Opinion of the leading Members of the Presbytery, that they were empowered to ask my private Thoughts on any Point of Divinity, under the Penalty contained in that Act, I according to it expressed the Question, in these Terms, as in the Minute, with the Addition of that Clause. The other Reason these Members gave for their Opinion, was, That as a Society they had a Right to try all Persons before they were admitted into publick Trust in the Church, even by requiring of the Candidates their private Thoughts and Sentiments on any Point of Divinity, and therefore they could not but have the same Right of trying those that were already possessed of publick Offices, when they thought fit, or might suspect them. To which I answered, That the Apostle enjoins that Persons, who are to be admitted to publick Offices in the Church, *should first be proved*, and sets down the Qualifications requisite in all who are to be advanced to them ; according to which we have good Rules established in this Church,

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Church, for the trying of Candidates; and told them I had undergone Trials twice in this Church, according to these good Rules, and being judged qualified, was admitted. But with Respect to these who are already admitted into, and invested with a publick Office, the Apostle gives a very different Rule, with Respect to any Scandal they may be suspected of, *wiz. That an Accusation is not to be received against an Elder or Presbyter, but before Two or Three Witnesses;* which, as it is manifestly just, so it is necessary for the good of Society, whether Civil or Ecclesiastical. To which I now beg Leave to add, That a Presbytery, in trying a Candidate for the Ministry, is to enquire by proper Methods, such as are contained in the good Rules of this Church, if he has the Qualifications necessary for the right Discharge of an honourable Office, that is joined with a *Benefice*, which to the Candidate is a *Privilege*, and to these that employ him an *important Trust*, who therefore have a Right to know, whether he be *found in the Faith, and apt to teach, &c.* But the Case is so far different in the trying of Scandals, that if such Candidate were accused of any Scandal, either in Doctrine or Morals, his Trials for the Ministry would be stopped, until he were tried, according to the Form of Process, for the Scandals objected against him; and if a Person, who is desired to enter on Trials, should decline it, he would not on that Account be suspected of any Error or Immorality, but only be thought so modest, as to judge himself not qualified, or that he did not incline to that Work or Office. Whereas the Case is quite otherwise with Respect to these who are in Possession of an Office in the Church, which they have a Right unto *ad vitam aut culpam*, both by the Rules of the Gospel, Constitutions of this Church, and the Laws of the Land, so as they become in a Manner their *Freehold*, which they are not to be deprived of, unless by *due Course of Ecclesiastical Process* they be found guilty of a Fault deserving that Penalty; see the Act of Parliament *ratifying the Confession of Faith, and settling Presbyterian Church Government*, anno 1690. In which Case the Apostle appoints the common Rule of trying all Scandals in other Men to take Place, as do the Rules of this Church, and the Acts of Parliament: Wherefore there is no Consequence from the just Method of trying Candidates for an Office, and trying Scandals, the Design and End of them being so vastly different. I therefore humbly think it is the necessary Duty of every honest Subject, and especially of any Minister of this Church, to oppose *this Method of Inquisition*, when some Ministers of Note in it are setting up for it, as a just and necessary Method of *trying and issuing Scandals*; contrary to the Rules of the Gospel, Constitutions of this Church, and the Laws of the Land, and the Rights of every free Subject; for which Reason I think my self obliged in Conscience to refuse

false Compliance with it, and to testify against it ; and I am persuaded my sinful Compliance with it is an unwarrantable Means for removing the groundless Suspicions of others. The Moderator having reported to me the Presbytery's Opinion, That they thought themselves empowered to ask my private Thoughts; with some Qualifications, which I did neither well understand, nor could remember ; I desired it might be minuted by the Clerk, and given me in Writing, that I might consider it. But it was moved by some, that I should first propose any other Questions I found needful ; whereupon, without reclaiming, I propoited this Question, Whether the Questions they had given me to answer, were contained in our Confession of Faith and Catechisms ? The Reason I gave for this, was, because after the best Search I could make, I did not find they were determined in our own, or any other Catholick Creed or Confession of Faith, since the Commencement of Christianity, it being plain, that the Presbytery's Terms were contained in none of them ; and therefore if they meant not something else by them, I knew no Reason why they should depart from the Form of sound Words. Then I proposed the other Questions, as contained in the Minute of Presbytery. Upon this a good many Members thought it reasonable to satisfy me about these Questions, seeing I had no Access to hear their Reasonings about them, either in the Presbytery or Committee ; but some leading Members said, it would take them too much Time and Labour, and instead thereof proposed the Overture ; which being agreed to by the Plurality, is insert into the Minute, notwithstanding I had told them, That it seethed strange to me, why they went so far about the Bush, when the Case was so very plain, that they had nothing to do, but to set down such and such a Proposition in my Letter, and tell me this is erroneous, or of a doubtful Meaning ; in which Case I would have freely answered them ; or if by their Eight Months Enquiry into what I have taught or published on the Doctrine of the Holy Trinity, or any other Article of our Religion, they had found any Thing erroneous, and named Witnesses to prove it, I would have freely answered them according to the Form of Process ; and craved oftner than once they might follow this Method. And I still insist that both the Presbytery and Committee of Assembly do follow the Rules laid down in the Form of Process, if they think they have any just Ground of proceeding against me, either from my Letter or otherwise, which I am as yet persuaded they have not. I believe every candid By-stander will think it strange, that the Presbytery of Glasgow should say, They suspect me of Error, about the Holy Trinity, and yet have not to this Day named to me, so much as one single Error, of which they suspect me to be guilty, tho' they have had a large Account of my Faith and Doctrine on that Subject,

ject, contained in my Letter lying before them these Eight Months. I therefore humbly crave, That the Reverend Committee may correct the Presbytery of Glasgow's Mistake, and the wrong Steps they have made in this Affair, and oblige them to proceed according to the good Rules of this Church, contained in their Form of Process, which by the Act of last Assembly about me they are obliged to follow, and are the only proper Means for removing false Reports and groundless Suspicions. That our Gracious God may guide you into wise and righteous Measures in the Management of this Affair, so as it may be for the promoting of Peace, with Truth in the Church, is the earnest Desire of,

V. R. and D. B.

*Your affectionate Brother and  
Servant in the Lord.*

Glasgow, November

7. 1726.

JOHN SIMSON.

Edinburgh, November 9. 1726.

THE Committee for Preservation of Purity of Doctrine, appointed a Letter to be written to the Presbytery of Glasgow, advising them to point out the Passages in the Professor's Letter, on which these Questions to him are founded: And to take particular Notice of the Passages of the Word of God, and Confession of Faith, and Larger and Shorter Catechisms of this Church founded thereupon, to which they judge these are contrary."

Glasgow November 23. 1726.

THE Presbytery declared they were willing to comply with the Advice of the above Committee, in pointing out to the said Professor the Passages in his Letter on which their Questions to him are founded, and also to take particular Notice of the Passages of the Word of God, Confession of Faith, and Larger and Shorter Catechisms of this Church, which they had in their Eye in forming the saids Questions, and accordingly appointed their Moderator, Mr. John Gray, Mr. John Hamilton, and Mr. John McLaurin to draw up the saids References in Form, and to lay them before the Presbytery at their Evening Sederunt at Four of the Clock this Afternoon. Then the said Professor craved, that besides drawing up

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this Charge from his Letter to the Presbytery of the second of March last, that the Presbytery also draw up any further Charge they may have against him, of what he has vented or taught contrary to the Holy Scriptures, Confession of Faith and Catechisms, which they can prove by Witnesses; and draw up an entire Charge of the whole, with an Account of the Passages of Scripture, Confession of Faith and Catechisms, to which they judge these Propositions are contrary, with a List of the Witnesses Names and Designations who can prove the same and that this Charge may be put in his Hands to see and answer. And declares, that he is heartily willing to give his Answer to the Reverend Presbytery on such a Charge.

### The Presbytery of Glasgow's References anent Professor SIMSON's Affair.

Q. I. *Wh*ether are there Three distinct Substances in the Three Persons of the Godhead; or, is it one and same numerical Substance that is in them all?

This Question arises from the Difference the Letter seems to make betwixt the Divinity of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. It is true, in the first Part of the Letter, it is affirmed, That the same Divinity, which originally is in the Father, is eternally communicated to the Son and Holy Ghost. But as some have affirmed this, who yet hold that the Three Persons are Three distinct Minds or Beings; so the second Part of the Letter supposes, that there is no Mention in Scripture, or our Confession, of Christ his being *ens necessarium*, or yet *Independent*, which seems to say, that the Necessary-existence of the Son of God, and his *Independency* are no Part of the Professor's Faith; and if the Deity of the Father be *Necessarily-existent* and *Independent*, but the Deity of the Son and Holy Ghost is not so, at least no Matter of Faith, then it would appear there is such a Difference betwixt the Divinity of the one and of the other, that it must be a Question if it be one and the same Substance in Number, or one Numerical Substance that is possessed by them all.

The Presbytery refer to the Confession, Chap. II. Sect. 1. There is but one only living and true God. Sect. 3. In the Unity of the God-head, there are three Persons of one Substance, &c. Larger Catechism, Answer to Quest. IX. There be three Persons in the God-head, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one true eternal God, the same in Substance, equal in power and Glory, altho' distinguished by their personal Pro-

*Properties.* The Presbytery also refer to the Scriptures cited for proving the above Articles. All which laid together, imports such a strict Unity in the God-head, as there can be but one Substance, one in Number, or Numerically, and can never be reconciled to the Notion of three distinct Substances or Beings in the God-head.

Quest. II. *Whether is the Son Necessarily-existent, in the ordinary Sense of the Word, so that it is impossible that he should not have been?*

The Letter gives Occasion for this Query, when it tells us, in the Passage before cited, That there is no Mention in Scripture, or our Confession, of Christ's being *ens necessarium*; and that the Professor never mentioned it either in teaching or preaching; which seems to say, that Christ's being Necessarily-existent is no Matter of Faith with him.

The Presbytery refer to *Confession, Chap. VIII. Sect. 2d.* which asserts, *That the Son is Very and Eternal God, and Chap. II. Sect. 1st. The true God is Infinite in Being and Perfection immutable.* The Presbytery think Infiniteness in Being, and Perfection and Immutability, infer *Necessary-existence*; and therefore, *If Christ be Very God, he must according to the Confession be Necessarily-existent.* The Presbytery also refer to the Scriptures cited for proving the above Articles.

Q. III. *Whether is the Deity of the Son and Holy Ghost Self-existent and Independent?*

The Letter gives Occasion for this; for after it has said in the First Part, "That to be of None, is the Personal Property of the Father,—and that his personal Property cannot be affirmed of the Son,—and the same holds true of the Holy Ghost, it adds: "The Professor took Notice, That the Father's being of None, is the same that many Authors understand by being Self-existent, taken in the negative Meaning." From which it appears that the Professor, without giving them any Caution against the Mistake, would have the Students take Notice, that Self-existence may be taken for the personal Property of the Father, and consequently that the Divine Nature in the Son and Holy Ghost is not Self-existent. As to Christ's Independency, the Presbytery refer to that Part of the Letter above-cited, which says, "It never came in his Thoughts to mention Christ's being *ens necessarium*—As little did I mention the Word *Independent*, for this same Reason; and afterwards: And if the Words *Independent* and *Necessarily-existent* be taken in a Sense that includes the personal Property of the Father, they cannot be applied to the Son."

This Doctrine seems not agreeable to the *Confession, Cap. II. Sect. 2d.* which affirms, *God hath all Life, Glory, Goodness, Blessedness in and of himself, and is alone in and unto himself All-sufficient.* Consequently that the Son, considered as he is

God, must be *Self-existent* and *Independent*, having all Life in and of himself, and being alone in and unto himself All-sufficient; and the same holds true of the Deity of the Holy Ghost. The Presbytery also refer to the Scriptures cited for proving the said Article or Question.

Quest. IV. *Is this Title, the Most High God, in the highest Sense used in Scripture, due to Christ as he is God?*

The Letter gives Occasion for this, when it tells us, It is probable the Professor might have said, The Title *summus Deus* is to be taken *cum grano salis*, when applied to the Son, and afterwards supposes it may be taken in such a Sense as to include the Father's personal Property, and in this Sense could not be truly affirmed of the Son.

The Presbytery refer to *Confession*, Chap. VIII. Sect. 2. *The Son being very and eternal God, of one Substance, and equal with the Father. And Larger Catechism, Answer to Quest. IX. There be Three Persons in the Godhead, the Father, the Son; and the Holy Ghost, and these Three are One True Eternal God, the same in Substance, equal in Power and Glory.*

If the Father be the *Most High God*, in Comparison with the Son as he is God, it is not easy to see how the Father and Son are equal in Glory.

The Presbytery also refer to the Scriptures cited for proving the above Propositions.

Quest. V. *Whether is it agreeable to Scripture, and the Confession of Faith, to ascribe to the Father that Title, the only true God, in such a Sense as it cannot be affirmed of the Son and Holy Ghost.*

The Letter gives Ground for this, when it bears towards the Close, "As for that Text, John xvii. 3. when that Phrase, "the only true God, is taken in a Sense that includes the Father's personal Property, it cannot in that Sense be applied to the Son, but only to the Father."

The Presbytery refer as above, to *Confession*, Chap. VIII. Sect. 2d. and *Larger Catechism*, Answ. to Quest. IX. and to the Scriptures cited for proving these Articles.

Quest. VI. *This is a Desire from the Presbytery, to know why the Professor, in teaching the Doctrine of the Trinity, has not mentioned the Terms Independent, Dependent, and Subordinate, seeing Adversaries of the Truth assert the Dependence of the Son, and his Subordination, as to his Divinity, to the Father; and there seemeth to be as much Need as ever to caution Students against this Subordination and Dependence?*

The Letter gives Occasion for this, when it says, "The Professor did not, in teaching, mention the Word *Independens*; and that it was upon a Student's proposing an Objection, whereupon he mentioned the Words *Dependent* and *Independent*, that the

" the Professor spoke of the Words *Dependent* and *Independent*,  
" *Co-ordinate* and *Subordinate*."

The Presbytery want to know, why the Professor did not at least take so much Notice of these Terms, as to guard the Students against that Dependence of the Son, and Subordination, as to his Divinity, to the Father, which is pleaded for by the known Adversaries of the Truth, and is contrary to what our Confession affirms of him, who is True God, Chap. II. Sect. 2d. and also to what it asserts of the Equality of the Son with the Father, Chap. II. Sect. 3d. Chap. VIII. Sect. 2d. Larger Catechism, Answer to Quest. IX. and also to the Scriptures cited under these Articles.

**ANSWERS** by Mr. JOHN SIMSON, Professor of Divinity in the University of Glasgow, to the R. Presbytery of Glasgow's Paper, intituled, References anent Professor Simson's Affair.

THE Committe for preserving *Purity of Doctrine*, appointed by the last General Assembly of this Church, having, in their Meeting at Edinburgh, the Ninth of November last, " Advised the Presbytery of Glasgow to point out the Passages in the Professor's Letter, (to wit, of my Letter to the said Presbytery of the Second of March last) on which these Questions (which the said Presbytery had proposed) to him are founded, and to take particular Notice of the Passages of the Word of God, and *Confession of Faith*, and *Larger and Shorter Catechisms* of this Church, founded thereupon, to which they judge these are contrary." And the said Presbytery, in their Meeting the Twenty Third of the said Month having declared, That they were willing to comply with the Advice of the said Committee, they drew up a Paper, intituled, *References anent Professor Simson's Affair*, which having been sent me by their Clerk, I found they seem'd to blame and object against some Passages of my said Letter, tho' they do not say directly, that any Proposition in it is contrary to the Word of God, the *Confession of Faith* or *Catechisms* of this Church; and I being heartily willing to give my Reverend Brethren all just and reasonable Satisfaction, according to the Rules of the Gospel, the Constitution of this Church, and Laws of the Nation, as to what seems to them Faulty in my Letter, do according to my Promise give the following An-

Answers, in which I follow the Order of the Passages of my Letter, the Parts whereof are not numbered, and compare with them the Presbytery's Objections contained under their several Questions, which being numbered in their Paper, are easily found out.

The first Passage in my Letter objected against by the Presbytery is, what I say of the *personal Properties* of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, which they say gives Occasion for their third Question.

That I may set both their Objection and my Answer in a due Light, I shall set down the whole Passage referred to as follows.

" In the next Place I proved, there is and can be but One God, both according to the Light of Nature and *Revelation*; but yet (according to what is well taught in the 3d *Sect.* of the said 2d *Chap.* of our *Confession*) that in the Unity of the Godhead, there be Three Persons of One Substance, Power and Eternity, God the Father, &c. who are distinguished by their *personal Properties* therein mentioned, the Nature and Incommunicableness of which do equally prove the real Distinction of the Persons and the Oneness of their Godhead; for the Father is of none, neither Begotten nor Proceeding, and begets the Son: The Son is Eternally Begotten of the Father, the Holy Ghost Eternally Proceeding from the Father and the Son, and the Property of each Person is Incommunicable to either of the other two; as is owned by all sound Divines, e. g. The *personal Property* of the Father cannot be truly affirmed of the Son, by whatever Expressions or Words it be done; for it would be the same as to say, The Son is of none, he is not Begotten of the Father, but begets the Father, which manifestly contradicts the express Words of our *Confession*, and of the Holy Scriptures, and what our Divines commonly teach according to them. The same holds true of the *personal Properties* of the Son and Holy Ghost. I also by the Way took Notice, That the Father's *being of None*, is the same that many Authors understand of being *Self-existent*; taken not absurdly in the positive Sense, but in the negative; meaning that he has his *Being and Godhead of None*."

I do not think the Presbytery blame my saying, " That to be of *None* is the *personal Property* of the Father, and that his *personal Property* cannot be affirmed of the Son; and the same holds true of the Holy Ghost," tho' they cite these Words; but what they find Fault with is, " That the Professor took Notice, that the Father's *being of None*, is the same that many Authors understand by being *Self-existent*, taken in the negative Meaning. From which (they say) it appears that the Professor, without giving them any Caution against the Mistake, would have the Students take Notice, that *Self-existence* may be taken for the personal Pro-

" perty

" perty of the Father, and consequently that the Divine Na-  
" ture in the Son and Holy Ghost is not Self-existent."

To which I answer, I do not say, *That Self-existence may be taken, which usually signifies, may be rightly taken*; but my Words, that need no Comment, are, *The Father's being of None, is the same that many Authors understand by being Self-existent*, which plainly relate a Fact not controverted by the Presbytery; and if it were, can be easily proved. Now the Students needed no further Caution in this Case, but to warn them of this Fact; for *being of None is the personal Property, or the distinguishing Character of the Father*, as our Confession teaches, and no Doubt the Presbytery owns; which accordingly I had taught the Students before I made this Remark, as my Letter also relates. After which the Students had only to take Notice, whether the Authors they read took *Self-existence* to signify *Being of None*, and in that Sense affirmed it of the Father only, or called it his *personal Property*. If so, they taught the Truth, albeit they might express it by an unfit or ambiguous Word; for in this Case the Word *Self-existent* has the same Meaning as the Words *Being of None*; and if these Words, *Being of None*, be put in the Presbytery's Reasoning, instead of the Word *Self-existent*, when signifying the same as they do, what they say will run thus: "The Professor, without giving them any Caution against the Mistake, would have the Students take Notice, *That being of None may be taken for (or rather is) the personal Property of the Father.*" And their next Conclusion, according to the Terms contained in their Premisses, should be; and consequently, *the Son and Holy Ghost are not of None.*

Whence I persuade my self, that the Presbytery upon Reflection, will find nothing faulty in this Passage of my Letter, which contains the expreis Doctrine of our Confession, Chap. II. Sect. 3. Tho' they may be displeased with the Authors who take the Word *Self-existent* in its negative Meaning, to signify *Being of None*; and I should take it as a Piece of useful Caution, or Instruction, both to me and the Students, if the Presbytery would declare the true Meaning of that English Term of Art, when it is to be *affirmed* of the Person of the Son or Holy Ghost.

The Presbytery here add, This Doctrine seems not agreeable to the Confession, Cap. II. Sect. 2. which affirms, *God bath all Life, Glory, Goodness, Blessedness in and of himself, and is alone in and unto himself All-sufficient.*

Now I having shewed that this Passage of my Letter affirms the expreis Doctrine of our Confession, Cap. II. Sect. 3. I hope the Presbytery will not any more say, this Doctrine seems not agreeable to the Confession, Cap. II. Sect. 2. being persuaded, they neither do think, nor will say, that the Doctrine

ctrine in *Sect. 2.* of that *Cap.* seems not agreeable to the Doctrine taught in the third *Sect.* thereof; and the same is to be said concerning the Scriptures cited for proving the Doctrine of these two *Sects.*

The Presbytery and I being, as I hope, thus agreed in maintaining the express Doctrine of our Confession, I have no Occasion to consider their following Reasoning and Consequences drawn from it, whether good or bad, seeing they can infer nothing against this Passage of my Letter, more than against the Doctrine of our Confession, *Cap. II. Sect. 3.* and consequently they have no better Reason to ask their *third Question of Me*, than of that *Venerable Assembly of Divines*, who compiled our Confession, were they now alive, and within their Jurisdiction, or of any other Member of this Church, that has signed our Confession, and adheres to it, as I do. What the Presbytery say here with respect to Christ's *Independency*, shall be considered afterwards in its proper Place.

The second Passage of my Letter found Fault with by the Presbytery, which they say gives Occasion to their fourth Question, is my Answer to the first Report, which is this, "I shall begin with that, *Christus non est summus Deus*, and when I had read in *Pictet*, *Christus est summus Deus*, I said it was to be understood *cum grano salis*, tho' I do not remember that I then used this Expression, yet I think it is probable I might, because I often use it on the like Occasion, namely, When a Term is not to be taken in the greatest Latitude, wherein it is used in some Authors. Yet, I remember I said, if the Words, *summus Deus*, were taken in such a Latitude, as to include the Father's personal Property, as they are by some Authors, they could not in that Sense be truly affirmed of the Son; but if meant of Christ's being Creator and Sovereign Governor of the World, or of the Essential Perfections that are common to the Father and the Son; Then they would truly agree to him; and told them, that *Pictet* manifestly took them in this Sense, according to which all his Arguments were conclusive."

The Presbytery mistake the Meaning of the first Part of my Answer to this Report, and give it a quite other Meaning, than I had at Writing it, or yet have of it, and which I think my Words will not bear. They express it in Words of their own, thus, "The Letter tells us, 'tis probable the Professor might have said, the Title *summus Deus* is to be taken *cum grano salis*, when applied to the Son."

Whereas I only say, "'Tis probable I might Then, (or on that Occasion) have used the Expression *cum grano salis*, because I often use it on the like Occasion." So what I own 'tis probable I might have said, amounts to this, The Words *summus Deus*, when applied to the Persons of the *Blessed Trinity*,

nity, are to be taken *cum grano jalis*; that is, Authors do not always use them precisely in the same Sense or Latitude of Meaning, some taking them to include only the Essential Perfections of the Divine Nature, that are common to all the Persons of the Godhead, which is their usual Meaning in our Systems, wherein also Pidet here takes them; but they are sometimes taken in a larger Sense by some Authors, so as not only to include the Essential Perfections, but likewise the Father's personal Property; but I do not suppose these Words *may be* rightly taken in this Sense, as the Presbytery's Words may be understood: Then I add, "When the Words *summus Deus* " are taken in this Sense, they cannot be truly affirmed of the "Son," which is all one with this, it cannot be truly affirmed "of the Son, That he is of none, neither begotten nor proceeding, and begets the Father, tho' it be expressed in other Words; therefore, altho' the Presbytery may be displeased with the Authors, who take the Words *summus Deus* in this Sense, yet they have no Reason to be displeased with me, for telling the Students, that some Authors took them so; and that in that Sense they could not be truly affirmed of the Son: Which Cau-  
tion is the more needful to the Students, because these Words are taken in a Sense peculiar to the Father, not only by the Adversaries of the Doctrine of the *Blessed Trinity*, but likewise by *some of the most zealous and able Defenders of it*, both ancient and modern; *the last of whom* call the Father *summus Deus*, by Way of Eminence, on Account of his *being of none*, and the *Fountain of the Deity*, especially when they are answering some Objections of Adversaries, notwithstanding of which they were as far as any in the Presbytery from thinking or teaching, that *the Father was a different God from the Son*, or that *the Father was a higher, and the Son a lower God*; but on the contrary, they maintained, that *the Son was one God with the Father*; which I should have proved from their Writings, had the Presbytery called in Question the Truth of the Fact.

Now having removed the Presbytery's Mistake, and made it appear, that the Words *summus Deus*, when taken to include in their Meaning the Father's personal Property, cannot in that Sense be truly affirmed of the Son, without a manifest Contradiction to the express Words of our *Confession*, Chap. II. Sect. 3d. and to the Scriptures cited for proving that Article. I hope the Presbytery will be satisfied, that there is nothing in that Passage of my Letter contrary to our *Confession*, Chap. VIII. Sect. 2d. and *Larger Catechism*, *Answer to Question 9th*, or to the Scriptures cited for proving these Articles here referred to by the Presbytery (and will come to be considered afterwards) which 'tis plain it cannot be, unless the Doctrine of our *Confession*, Chap. II. Sect. 3d. be contrary to them, in which

Doctrine, I hope the Presbytery and I are agreed: And therefore, I have no Occasion to consider their following Reasonings, seeing they conclude nothing against this Passage of my Letter, when rightly understood, and which gives no Occasion for their Fourth Question.

The Third Passage of my Letter, against which the Presbytery object, is my Answer to that Report, *Christus non est ens necessarium*. The whole Passage is as follows, " As to that Report, *Christus non est ens necessarium*, there being no Mention thereof either in the Holy Scriptures, or in our Confession of Faith, or in the System I teach, it never came in my Thoughts to mention it, either in Teaching or Preaching; as little did I mention in teaching the Word *Independent* for the same Reason; but upon a Student's propounding an Objection, wherein he mentioned the Words *Dependent* and *Independent*, I answered, That the Words *Dependent* and *Independent*, *Co-ordinate* and *Subordinate* were never in Scripture or our Confession of Faith, applied to the personal Properties and Relations of the Divine Persons, nor could we safely and pertinently apply them so, because they are ordinarily used with Respect to Creatures, in a Sense not applicable to the Persons of the Glorious Godhead; yet all are agreed, That if the Words *Independent* and *Necessarily-existent* be taken in a Sense that includes the Personal Property of the Father, they cannot be applied to the Son; but if said of him in any Sense, consistent with the personal Properties of the Father and the Son, they will no doubt agree to him."

The Presbytery's First Objection against this Passage, is on their First Question, where they say, *The Second Part of the Letter supposes, that there is no Mention in Scripture, or our Confession, of Christ his being Ens necessarium, nor yet Independent, which seems to say, That the Necessary-existence of the Son of God, and his Independency are no Part of the Professor's Faith.*

This Objection I think arises from a Mistake of my Meaning, as if I had said, That Christ's being *Necessarily-existent* or *Independent* were neither expressly taught in Scripture, nor our Confession, nor could by just Consequence be deduced therefrom; whereas I am there speaking of Words mentioned, or expressly used in Scripture, or our Confession, of which I hope the Presbytery will be satisfied by observing, that thro' that whole Passage I am speaking of Words that are mentioned or expressed in Scripture, or our Confession, or in the System I teach on the Subject of the Trinity, viz. Pictet's Latin Compend. Now to mention Words plainly signifies to use or express them, as in that Part of this Passage; But upon a Student's propounding an Objection, wherein he mentioned the Words, &c. And in the

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Close of the Passage, *If the Words Independent and Necessity-existent be taken in a Sense, &c.* So the necessary Meaning of what I say amounts to this; it is not mentioned or expressly said in Scripture, or our Confession of Faith, or in the System I teach, That Christ is a *Necessary Being*, or *Necessarily-existent* or *Independent* of his Father, or *Christus est ens necessarium, & independens a Patre*, which must be the Meaning of this Word *Independent* in this Place; for I suppose the Presbytery make no Objection against my Letter concerning the Son's *Independency* on the Creatures, which it owns were all created by him and for him, and therefore do all depend on him as their Creator and Sovereign Lord. Yet the Presbytery's mentioning the Son's *Independency*, without Restriction, might lead an unwary Reader or Hearer to think, that it seemed *Christ's Independency on the Creatures* was no Part of my Faith, which I am persuaded they do not intend.

Now had the Reverend Presbytery taken Notice of what I have now shewed to be the necessary Meaning of my Words, I am confident they would not have alledged, that this seems to say, That the *Necessary-existence* of the Son of God and his *Independency* are no Part of the Professor's Faith, because for the same Reason it will equally seem, that the *Necessary-existence* of the Son of God and his *Independency*, are no Part of the Faith of the Prophets and Apostles, nor of the Assembly of Divines, who composed our Confession of Faith, nor of the Church of Scotland, who received it as the Confession of her Faith; it being certain, that these Expressions or Propositions are not mentioned, either in the Holy Scriptures, or our Confession of Faith, the Truth whereof is confirmed by the Presbytery's not producing them. Instead of which, they refer to Confession, Cap. II. Sect. 1. and 3. and Larger Catechism, Answer to Quest. 9. and to the Scriptures cited for proving these Articles; in none of which these Words or Propositions are mentioned or expressed, but other Words from which the Presbytery do by Reasoning infer their Conclusion. Now my Letter doth plainly own and maintain the same Truths that are express in the Passages of our Confession and Catechisms referred to by the Presbytery, which will appear by comparing them as follows.

#### *Letter.*

" The Scripture Character of  
" the true God, whereby he is  
" distinguished from all false  
" Gods whatsoever (is) by be-  
" ing the Creator of the World,--  
" The absolute Lord,—And the  
" Supreme Governor.— The

#### *Confession and Catechism.*

" There is but one only liv-  
" ing and true God; in the U-  
" nity of the Godhead there be  
" Three Persons of one Sub-  
" stance, &c. There be Three  
" Persons in the Godhead, the  
" Father, the Son and the Holy  
" Ghost,

**Ghost, and these Three are one true Eternal God, the same in Substance, equal in Power and Glory, and distinguished by their personal Properties.**

" Apostle John having said, That the Word or Son was God, proves the Truth of it by the same Argument used by Moses, to prove that the God of Israel was the true God, " namely, That all Things were made by him. And I proved " that there is and can be but one God, both according to the " Light of Nature and Revelation; but yet (according to " what is well taught in the 3d Sect. of the said 2d Cap. of " our Confession) that in the Unity of the Godhead, there be " Three Persons of one Substance, Power and Eternity, God " the Father, &c. who are distinguished by their personal Pro- " perties therein mentioned, the Nature and Incommunicable- " ness of which do equally prove the real Distinction of the " Persons and the Oneness of their Godhead.— That the Son " and Holy Ghost, tho' distinct Persons from the Father, and " each of them God, yet they could not be different Gods " from him.— And this Doctrine being discovered to us in " the Holy Scriptures alone, and well summed up in the 3d " Sect. of the said 2d Cap. of our Confession, and in Larger " Catechism, Quest. 9, 10, 11. I took all possible Care to keep " close by the Expressions used in Scripture and our Confes- " sion, being sensible of the Danger of essaying to be wise a- " bove what is written, in teaching a Doctrine so far above " our Comprehension, and which we can know nothing of by " the Light of Nature"

By which I hope the Presbytery will be satisfied, that my Letter contains all these Truths, that are taught in the Places of our Confession and Catechism referred to; and the Scriptures cited for proving these Articles prove the same Truths mentioned in my Letter: And therefore they might as justly have inferred their Conclusion from these Passages in my Letter, as from those of our Confession and Catechism referred to. Seeing then the Presbytery and I are agreed about the Truths mentioned in the Word of God and our Confession, from which they make their Inferences, I am not concerned to examine, whether their Inferences be right or wrong, because they can conclude nothing against me, more than against the Truths mentioned in Scripture, Confession and Catechisms referred to; and on the other hand, they have no Reason to ask of me their first Question, more than of the Assembly of Divines, who framed our Confession, were they now alive, or any other Minister of this Church.

**Object. 2. A second Objection against the same Passage of my Letter, which the Presbytery give as the Occasion of their second Question, is only a Repetition of the former, with this Addi-**

**tion,**

dition, That the Professor never mentioned Christ's being *ens necessarium*, either in Teaching or Preaching.

In Answer to which, I need only refer to my Answer to their former Objection, and apply their Mistake of my Meaning to these other Words of mine, which they now cite, *namely*,

" That I never mentioned (or expressed) either in teaching or preaching these Words, *Christus est ens necessarium*, or, *Christ is a necessary Being* ;" which is true I never did, because I do not read them, either in the Holy Scriptures or our *Confession of Faith*, according to that Passage of my Letter just now cited.

" I took all possible Care to keep close by the Expressions used in Scripture and our Confession ;" and the Passages of our Confession, referred to by the Presbytery, do not mention these Words, but others, from whence they infer their Conclusion ; yet these Words of Scripture, our Confession, and the Truths taught by them, I have always owned, and do yearly mention them in teaching, as I have often in preaching, and they are plainly contained or owned in my Letter, as appears by the Passages of it and our Confession, &c. collated in my Answer to the former Objection, to which I shall add these Passages referred to by the Presbytery on this Question, and the parallel Places of my Letter.

#### *Confession.*

" The Son is very  
" and eternal God, the  
" true God is infinite  
" in Being, and Per-  
" fection—immu-  
" table.

#### *Letter.*

The former Citations declare the Son  
to be true God, which signifies the same  
as very God. To which I add, The Son  
hath Life in himself, as well as the  
Father, namely, he is Infinite, Eternal,  
and Unchangeable in his Wisdom, Power,  
Holiness, Justice, Goodness, &c.

From this and the forecited Passages of my Letter, the Presbytery may as justly infer their Conclusion, as from those of the Confession they refer to; but they have not observed, That in the End of the same Passage of my Letter objected against, I say further, If the Words Independent and Necessarily-existent be taken in any Sense consistent with the personal Properties of the Father and the Son, they will no doubt agree to him, to wit, the Son.

And if I adhere to the Doctrine of Scripture and our Confession, Cap. II. Sect. 3d. I must maintain that these Terms, when taken in a Sense inconsistent with the personal Properties of the Father and the Son, cannot be applied to the Son ; and I shall not suspect, that the Presbytery will say, That the Son is Necessarily-existent and Independent, in a Sense inconsistent with the personal Properties of the Father and of the Son ; or that they will affirm, That the Son is of None, neither begotten nor proceeded-

proceeding, and begets the Father, in what Words soever this Meaning may be wrapt up, unless they declare it plainly, which I hope they will never do: Until then I shall believe, that they and I are agreed, that the Son is *Necessarily-existent* and *Independent*, in a Sense consistent with the Father's *being of None*, neither begotten nor proceeding, and with the Son's *being eternally begotten of the Father*. I am also humbly of Opinion, That I may teach and preach the whole Council of God revealed in his Word, concerning this sublime and important Subject, in the Words of Scripture and of our Confession of Faith, which are doubtless the safest and fittest, without using these ambiguous Terms of Art, which are apter to engender Strife, than to increase our Knowledge and Love of God, and of one another; for which, and other Reasons, I never used them my self in preaching, nor, to my Remembrance, did I ever hear them used by any other Minister in preaching.

From all which it is manifest, That by removing the Presbytery's Mistake of my Meaning, and collating the Passages of my Letter, with these of our Confession referred to, there is an exact Agreement betwixt the Confession and the Letter, and consequently no Occasion given to ask of me their second Question, more than of the Compilers of our Confession, were they alive, and sitting at Glasgow.

A 3d Object. the Presbytery make against the same Passage of my Letter, is upon their 6th Quest. Where they blame me for not mentioning in teaching "The Word *Independent*, and "that it was upon a Student's proposing an Objection, where- "in he mentioned the Words *Dependent* and *Independent*, "that I spake of the Words *Dependent* and *Independent*, *Co-* "ordinate and *Subordinate*; and they want to know, why I "did not at least take so much Notice of these Terms, as to "guard the Students against that Dependence of the Son, and "his *Subordination*, as to his Divinity, to the Father, which "is pleaded for by the known Adversaries of the Truth.

To which I answer, 1st. That I gave the Students as sufficient Caution against these Errors as our Confession of Faith and Catechisms do, by teaching and confirming the Truth of the Doctrine contained in all these Passages referred to by the Presbytery, as my Letter also narrates; yea I asfull y guarded the Students against these Errors, as Professor Piset does, who mentions not these Terms in teaching the Doctrine of the Trinity, nor are they mentioned in the Holy Scripture, or our Confession of Faith or Catechisms.

2dly, 'Tis plain by comparing the several Branches of the Doctrine of the *Holy Trinity*, mentioned in my Letter, that I gave the Students sufficient Caution against the *Dependence* and *Subordination* pleaded for by the Adversaries of the Truth; but being sensible, I may omit several Things necessary both for the

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Students Caution and Instruction, I always allowed them to propose any Difficulties that occur to them, and then endeavour to satisfie them as fully as I can, which, in the present Case, I think I have done sufficiently, by telling them, as I say in my Letter, *That the Words Dependent and Independent, Co-ordinate and Subordinate, are never in Scripture, or our Confession of Faith, applied to the personal Properties and Relations of the Divine Persons; nor could we safely and pertinently apply them so, because they are ordinarily used with respect to Creatures, in a Sense not applicable to the Persons of the Glorious Godhead.* By which the Students might easily perceive, when any Author says, the Son is *Dependent* upon, or *Subordinate* to the Father, that he does not use Scriptural, or suitable, or safe Terms: And even when they observe such an Author means no more by these Words, than that the Son is eternally begotten of the Father; tho' by taking these Words in this limited Sense, he teaches the Truth; yet he expresses it in very ambiguous and unsafe Words, that are apt to be mistaken; and when the Students find Authors taking these Words in a larger Sense, that is inconsistent with the essential Perfections and true Divinity of the only begotten Son of God, they may easily discern, that they teach Error. By all which I hope the Presbytery will be satisfied, that I gave the Students sufficient Caution against these Errors.

*4th Passage.* The last Passage of my Letter, wherewith the Presbytery seem to find Fault, and give as the Occasion of their 5th Quest. is this. "As to the Text John xvii. 3. where "our Lord, praying to his Father, calls him the *only True God.*" When that Phrase *only True God* is taken in a Sense "that includes the Father's personal Property, it cannot in that Sense be applied to the Son, but only to the Father; in which Sense it was taken by many of the Ancients, such as *Athanasius* and others, who were the most zealous Opposers, both of the *Arian* and *Sabellian* Heresies, as it is also by *Bishop Pearson* in the forecited Place, and by *Bishop Bull* in several Places of his *Defensio fidei Nicena*, and by other approved Divines."

Now this Passage plainly contains these two Things; the One, "That *Athanasius* and others, who were the most zealous Opposers of the *Arian* and *Sabellian* Heresies, as likewise *Bishops Pearson* and *Bull*, and other approved Divines, took these Words in a Sense that included the Father's "personal Property," which they did, in calling the Father, by Way of Eminence, *The only True God*, or *the One or only God*, because he only is of None, neither Begotten nor Proceeding, and is the *Fountain* of the *Deity*; that is, he begets the Son, and from him proceeds the *Holy Ghost*: Which Sense of the Words these Authors were so far from thinking, did exclude the Son from being *True God*; that some of them used it

as an Argument to prove he was *True God*; according to which Opinion the Father is called in the *Nicene* and other Catholick Creeds, *The one God Almighty, and the Son God of God, and True God of True God*; yet not a different God from the Father, but the same *True God* with him, tho' a Person distinct from him; as is manifest by the incomunicable personal Properties of the Father and the Son.

The other Thing in that Passage of my Letter is, " That when that Phrase, *The only True God* is taken in a Sense that includes the Father's personal Property, it cannot in that Sense be applied to the Son, but only to the Father."

Now as the Presbytery do not call in Question the Truth of the Fact related, so neither do they blame my saying, these Words cannot in that Sense be applied to the Son, but only to the Father; unless their citing them, as the Ground of their 5th Question, be a finding Fault with them; but I shall not be so uncharitable, as to think they blame me for this, until they do it expressly; because it would be in Effect to say, tho' in other Words, *The Son is of None, neither Begotten nor Proceeding*; which manifestly contradicts the express Doctrine of the Holy Scripture, and of our *Confession*, Cap. II. Sect. 3. which teaches, *That the Son is begotten of the Father*. And I hope the Presbytery and I are agreed, that the Doctrine of our *Confession*, Cap. VIII. Sect. 2. and *Larger Catechism*, Answer to Quest. 9th, and the Scriptures cited for proving these Articles referred to by the Presbytery, are not contrary unto, but do very well agree with the Doctrine of our *Confession*, Cap. II. Sect. 3. and the Scriptures cited for proving it; wherefore I hope the Presbytery will upon Reflection be satisfied, that this Passage of my Letter gave no Occasion for their 5th Quest. seeing they neither do nor can justly find Fault with any Thing in it.

Thus I have answered what the Presbytery seem'd to find Fault with, or object against in these Passages of my Letter, which they have pointed out to me: I have removed the Mistakes of my Meaning, on which their Objections were founded, and have shewed, that if when these Passages are taken, according to the true Import of my Words, they contain the Doctrine that is expressly taught in our *Confession of Faith*, Cap. II. Sect. 3. concerning the Three Persons of the Godhead, and their personal Properties, by which they are distinguished; which therefore must be incomunicable, whereof I gave an Example in the personal Property of the Father, which I say cannot be truly affirmed of the Son, by whatever Words or Expressions it be done. In all which I hope the Reverend Presbytery and I are fully agreed; after which there can remain no just Ground of Difference from the Passages of my Letter, mentioned in their References, they being only so many Instances

*stances of different Words or Expressions, by which the Father's being of None, neither Begotten nor Proceeding, and begetting the Son, either actually have been or may be meant by some Authors, whether the Words be used right or wrong; in which Sense alone I say these Words or Expressions cannot be truly affirmed of the Son, as will appear by this short View of them.*

1. The Word *Self-existent* is taken by many Authors, to signify *being of None*, in which Sense it cannot be truly said the Son is *Self-existent*, it being the same as to say, he is *not begotten of the Father*.

2. The Words *summus Deus* are sometimes taken to include in their Meaning, or signify *being of None*, and *begetting the Son*; in which Sense they cannot be affirmed of the Son, because it would be to say, in other Words, *The Son is of None*, he is not begotten of the Father, but begets the Father.

3. The Words *Necessarily-existent* and *Independent of the Father*, are ambiguous Terms of Art, used in very different Meanings, and are never affirmed of the Person of the Son of God, either in the Holy Scriptures, or in our *Confession* or *Catechisms*, or in the System I teach on the Subject of the Trinity: Wherefore I may reasonably forbear the Use of them, both in teaching and preaching; and yet the *Necessary-existence* of the Son of God and his *Independency* be as much a Part of my Faith, as of the Faith of the Prophets and Apostles, and of the Divines who fram'd our *Confession* and *Catechisms*, and of Professor *Pictet* and others, who do not use these Terms more than I do; nevertheless when these Words are taken in a Sense *consistent* with the Father's *being of None*, and begetting the Son, and with the Son's being eternally begotten of the Father, they will no Doubt agree to the Son, tho' they cannot be truly affirmed of him, when their Meaning is to be *of None, neither Begotten nor Proceeding*.

4. That Title, *Only true God*, hath been taken by many famous Christian Writers, who were zealous Defenders of the Doctrine of the Trinity, to signify or imply the Father's *being of None*, and his being the *Fountain* of the *Deity*, or the *Origin* of the other Two Persons, (as Mr. *Vincent* expresses in his *Explication of our Lesser Catechism*) in which Sense they applied that Title to the Father by way of Eminence, yet so as not to exclude the Son and *Holy Ghost* from being *True God*; wherefore this Title, taken in this Sense, cannot be applied to the Son, but only to the Father; because it would be to say, in other Words, *The Son is of None, neither begotten nor proceeding*, and is the *Fountain* or *Origin* of the Father and *Holy Ghost*.

From the Whole, I hope the Reverend Presbytery will be satisfied, that my *Letter*, according to the true Meaning of it, now laid before them, does plainly contain the express Doctrine

taught in our *Confession of Faith*, concerning the *Holy Trinity*, with the Addition of some Cautions to the Students, that may be of Use to them in reading the Writings both of ancient and modern Authors on that important Subject, whether they be Friends or Adversaries of the Truth.

To which I need only add, That my Letter, containing a full and an ingenuous Account of what I taught last Winter, concerning that *incomprehensible yet necessary Doctrine*, when I was brought very low by long and sore Affliction of Body; I hope they will be also satisfied, That the Reports spread abroad, of my having taught Error on that Subject, are groundless, false and injurious.

**T**hese Answers to the References were given in by Profess. for Simson to the Presbytery of Glasgow, January 5th, 1727. and they referred them to their next Meeting, January 18. at which Time they judged, that they did not answer any of the Presbytery's Questions, except the 6th. And January 19. they referred the further Consideration of them to the conjunct Meeting of the Committee of the Assembly and Presbytery, which did meet March 15.

March 16. The Committee and Presbytery found, That these Answers had not removed the Suspicion of the Professor's Unsoundness in his Teaching upon the Head of the *Trinity*: And agreed, that the next Meeting he be called to be present to answer the Queries. And March 17. He being still unable to wait on them, but sending an Excuse, which was sustained, " they agreed on the Articles of a Libel from the Precognition, " and appointed the Presbytery to prosecute the same, and to " call Mr. Simson before them, and to require him to give direct, plain and express Answers to the Questions. And the " Committee advised the Presbytery, by the Power committed " to them by the Assembly, to suspend him, if he refused to " answer, or if by his Answers it appear to them unsafe that he " should teach or preach: And if by his Refusal to answer, or " by giving such Answers as are dissatisfying, and that therefrom " further Ground of a Libel arise, that they add to the " said Libel, as they shall see Cause.

The Presbytery met March 22. to which Mr. Simson sent the following Representation; and the Consideration of it being delayed till the 29th of March, it was then again given in to the Presbytery.

**R E P R E S E N T A T I O N to the Presby-  
tery of Glasgow, by Mr. JOHN SIMSON,  
Professor of Divinity in the College of Glas-  
gow, March 29. 1727.**

**I**T was a very great Disadvantage to me, that thro' the afflicting Hand of God, (whose holy Providence I reverence) I was hindered from waiting on the Meeting of the Reverend Committee and Presbytery last Week, when they were judging of my Answers to the Presbytery's References, against which several *Objections* were made, which I might easily have removed, had I been present, and probably have satisfied both the Committee and Presbytery, that there was no just Reason to insist upon the Questions formerly proposed to me: Especially seeing they have thought fit to draw up a Libel against me from the Precognition taken by examining the Students; in which the Presbytery can easily insert any Thing that appears to them erroneous, or a just Ground of Suspicion from any Thing contained in my Letter, writ to them *March* last Year, or in my *Answers* to their *References*; which *Letter* and *Answers* were sincerely meant by me, to give such Satisfaction to my Reverend Brethren, as, I hoped, would be accepted by them; which I had the greater Reason to expect, because, tho' my *Letter* has lien before them more than a Year, they have not judged any Proposition in it contrary to Scripture, our Confession of Faith or Catechisms. By which I am led to think, that we are truly agreed in the Substance of the Doctrine, and only differ in the Way of accounting for it, or using the fittest Terms for expressing it.

If this be all, I think, we ought to forgive and forbear one another in Love, which I humbly conceive we are the more called to do, from what I have observed in my small Compass of Reading, and other Members of the Presbytery may have seen more of it; namely, That all who have essayed to be wise above what is written, in Teaching and Explaining the Doctrine of the *Holy Trinity*, by advancing *Hypotheses* not revealed in the Word of God, (from which alone we learn any Thing of this glorious Mystery) and using Terms of human Art, calculated for explaining the Nature of Creatures, and their Distinction and *Oneness*, have thereby led themselves and their Followers into manifest Contradictions, or inextricable Difficulties, whence have arisen bitter Contentions, pernicious Schisms; yea

*damnable Heresies* among the Professors of Christianity, even such of them as were endued with the greatest Measure of Acuteness and Learning.

A notable Instance hereof is contained in the History of the ancient Church, concerning the *Sabellian* and *Arian* Heresies, both of which arose from different Hypotheses, made Use of to explain and answer the Difficulty of there being but one God, and yet three Divine Persons. The *Arian* choosing to deprecate the Son and Holy Ghost into the Rank of Creatures, tho' glorious and highly dignified above all the rest, and so to be very improperly called God: On the other Hand, the *Sabellians* being convinced, from many Passages of Scripture, that such Names, Attributes, Works and Worship, as are peculiar to God only were ascribed to the Son and Holy Ghost, they made them only different *Attributes, Modes, Characters, or Names* of the same Divine Person, when the Word *Person* is taken in its *ordinary Meaning*, as applied to intelligent Creatures. Only I must notice, That for many Years after the Rise of these Heresies, there appears to have been no Dispute among them about the Holy Ghost, but only about the Father and the Son.

And I must freely own, that after all the Hypotheses, ancient and modern, that I have had Occasion to read and consider, I find none of them is sufficient to explain satisfactorily this incomprehensible Mystery, nor even to lessen, but rather to increase the Difficulties that occur in our searching into the Manner of it; and therefore I cannot but observe the gracious Conduct of Divine Providence, in guiding those who composed the Catholick Creeds in the ancient Church, and of those who composed the publick Confessions of Faith of the Protestant and Reformed Churches, to express the brief Sums of their Doctrine of the *Blessed Trinity*, very nearly in the Words of the Holy Scriptures, and to abstract from all the different Hypotheses that were made use of by themselves, or others of their Communion, for explaining or maintaining the said Doctrine. This appears plainly, as in others, so in the old Confessions of the Church of *Scotland*, and in the *Westminster* Confession of Faith, now received by this Church, and subscribed by all its Office-bearers as the Confession of their Faith, and as our Rule of Uniformity in Doctrine; in which the Distinction of the Persons by their incommunicable Properties is affirmed, and their Unity and Equality in the Godhead is declared, without mentioning any of the Hypotheses which were as well known then to the Framers of our Confession as they are to us now, and were made use of by several of the Members thereof in their particular Treatises, wherein they explained and defended that important Doctrine. And I know of no new Heresy that has arisen among us since that Time, tho' some old ones have been revi-

revived in a new Dress, which therefore cannot be refuted by using of the old School Terms and Hypotheses.

The obvious Reason of laying aside all these Hypotheses in the said Creeds and Confessions of Faith, is, that how useful soever they might think them for explaining that Doctrine, and removing Difficulties raised against it, yet they were not so clearly revealed in Scripture, as to be accounted necessary Articles of Christian Belief, or Conditions of Christian and Ministerial Communion, it being manifest that tho' the Doctrine of the Trinity it self be clearly taught in Scripture, yet the Manner of it is kept altogether a Secret, until that Day when Believers shall know, that Christ is in the Father, and the Father in him, and when they shall know, even as also they are known.

For these Reasons, altho' in former Years I have made use of different Hypotheses, that have been advanced by sundry Divines, of great Esteem among us; yet having found upon Trial, that none of them were sufficient for removing Difficulties that might be, or were urged on all Hands by the Adversaries of the Blessed Trinity, but on the contrary were ready to lead the Students into some dangerous Error or Mistake, I have satisfied my self these two last Years, with only naming to them some of the most celebrated Hypotheses, both ancient and modern, that have been made use of by such Authors as are esteemed found in the Faith of this Article, and zealous and able Defenders of it; and with observing the Defects and also Danger of some of them, without recommending any of them as certain.

In stead of all which I have thought it more for the Benefit of the Students, and the Interest of Truth, to observe to them, That the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, must be so far *distinct Persons*, as that the incommunicable Properties, Characters and Actions ascribed to them in Holy Scripture, and from thence inserted in our Confession of Faith and Catechisms, *must truly agree to them*: And on the other Hand, that they must be *so One among themselves*, as to be but *one true eternal God*, in Opposition to a Plurality of Gods; of *one and the same Substance, Power and Eternity*, in such a Way as is *consistent with the said Distinction of their Persons*, in Opposition to their being but one Person. The Nature and Measure of which *Oneness and Distinction* is not revealed in the Word of God, which alone teaches us this Doctrine; and 'tis probable we have not Faculties capable of apprehending it, and 'tis certain we have no Words fit for expressing it; There being no Terms applicable thereto, but such as were invented mostly by Heathens to express the Difference and Oneness of created Beings; which therefore still leads our Minds to frame Ideas of the Distinction and Oneness of the Divine Persons, like unto what obtains among Creatures, which can not possibly agree to the Persons of the Glorious Godhead, and which, I have observed in all Ages

Ages, has occasioned endless Debates and Contentions about it. In using this Method I follow the Example of some famous Divines, whose Caution and Prudence is more esteemed for laying aside all Hypotheses in explaining this Mystery, than others are for their Acuteness and Learning in advancing them, commonly to little good Purpose.

This is a special Reason, besides these mentioned in my Letter to the Presbytery, and Answers to their References, of my not using some of the Terms mentioned in the Presbytery's Questions, and my mentioning others of them only as Hypotheses, and propounding some Arguments to shew their Probability, and how far they may be safely used, and with some Advantage in dealing with some Adversaries of this important Truth, such as that of *one Substance in Number*, which being absolutely immense, in my Opinion, is common to all the Persons of the Trinity, consistently with the foresaid Distinction; yet I cannot dissemble, that when that Phrase, *One Substance in Number*, is used in the Sense wherein it is ordinarily applied to rational Creatures, or to express the Greek μονογενής, which was the Characteristick of the Sabellian Hereticks, as Athanasius says expressly in his *Expositio Fidei*, it will be inconsistent with the foresaid Distinction of the Persons.

I am surprized to find that many still entertain Suspicions, as if I did not own the Son of God to be a *necessary Being*, altho' I have declared in my Letter and Answers, that he is one God with the Father, and *as the Father hath Life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have Life in himself*, that is, *he is Infinite, Eternal and Unchangeable in his Being, Wisdom, Power, Holiness, Justice, Goodness, and other Divine Perfections, manifested by his creating and governing the World*; which in my Opinion do sufficiently prove him to be a *Necessary-being* to any Person that has not a Mind to cavil, as it satisfies me thereof; which Argument does also equally prove his *Essential-independency, Self-existence, and true Godhead*, whereby he is opposed to all false Gods whatsoever, as is God the Father, and in that Sense is, together with him, *the Most High God, and only true God*. All which I doubt not the Presbytery do with me understand of the Essential Perfections of the Divine Nature that are common to the Divine Persons, but not as including or meant of their *personal Properties*, as they are sometimes used even by some of the most eminent Friends of the Truth; such as these, a few Passages of whose Writings, instead of a great many, I have added at the End.

To which I need only add, That a chief Reason of my acquainting the Students, that these and other such Terms are made use of by some Authors in a peculiar Sense, expressing thereby the *Father's being of None, neither begotten nor proceeding*, is to guard them against these who are the Enemies of the

the *Eternal Deity* of the only begotten Son of God, lest under the Shadow of these great Men's Authority, they should ensnare young People, and draw them into their pernicious Errors, while they are not aware of the different Use that is made of these Terms by the Friends and Adversaries of the Truth.

I hope this may fully answer all the Difficulties I have as yet heard moved by the Presbytery, and remove even the *seeming Grounds of Suspicion* that any Person of Knowledge and Probity may have conceived of my maintaining or teaching Error about the Doctrine of the *Blessed Trinity*; and whatever Stories may be talked or whispered to the contrary of what I have written in this and in my Letter to the Presbytery, and Answers to their References, I crave and expect, that as good Christians, they will believe them to be False and Calumnious, till they be found legally proven.

Zanchius, Lib. 1mo, *De Tribus Elocibim*, Cap. IV. Col. 17.  
*Nunc igitur restat ut hoc confirmemus, & esse tres in Cælo, Patrem, Filium & Spiritum Sanctum, & hos tres esse tres res, seu substantias per se subsistentes, intelligentes, volentes, individuas, eoque veras personas.*

Par. 2da Lib. V. Cap. V. Col. 540. *Patrem vero, si aliquando solus vocatur Deus, sic vocari nat s̄οχνν, quia est principaliter Deus, fonsque totius Deitatis, itemque notandum est, in multis hujusmodi locis, circumstantias addi, quibus indicatur, quomodo solus pater vocatur Deus; nempe, solus ingenitus, & solus a quo vere omnia: Quia Filius & Spiritus Sanctus ab ipso sunt.* And he proves, both in the proceeding and following Discourse, That tho' the Father be on this Account the *one* or *only God*, because the Fountain of the Deity, only unbegotten, and the Person from whom all Things are; yet the Son and Holy Ghost are not thereby excluded from being *True God*, but included, and gives them the Title of *Autobetas*, because they are of one *Essence* with the Father.

Next, The learned and honourable Author of the *Critical History of the Apostles Creed*, Page 63, 64. "And in particular, " this Clause of one God—was inserted to require our Belief, " that there is but one Infinite, Supreme, Beginningless and " Eternal God; and that this one God, and none other, was " the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; so that this Expression of one God, denotes our Faith, that there is but one E- " ternal, Independent, Self-existent God."

Dr. Owen, in his *Mystery of the Gospel vindicated, &c.* Page 187. says, " It is true there is an Order, yea a Subordination " in the Persons of the Trinity themselves, whereby the Son, " as to his Personality, may be said to depend on the Fa- " ther, being begotten of him." And Page 273, " God could

" no Way make the World by Christ, but as he was his own  
 " Eternal Wisdom, which exempts him from the Condition of  
 " a Creature ; besides, as it is said, that God made the World  
 " by him, denoting the *Subordination* of the Son to the Fa-  
 " ther, and his Being his Wisdom, as he is described, *Prov.*  
 " viii. so also the Word is said to make the World as a prin-  
 " cipal efficient Cause himself, *John i. 3.*"

And in his Third *Exerc.* prefix'd to his *Commentary on the Epistle to the Heb.* Vol. II. Page 43. in explaining these Words of *Prov.* viii. 30. spoken of Wisdom, *Then I was with him, as one brought up with him,* says, " And we may enquire in what Sense this is spoken of the Son, with respect unto the Father. The Foundation of the Allusion lies in the eternal mutual Love that is between the Father and the Son ; thereunto is added the Consideration of the *natural Dependence* of the Son on the Father, compared unto the Love of a Father unto a Son, and the *Dependence* of a Son on his Father."

And *Comment.* Vol. I. Pag. 109. " God is said to be the God of the Son on a threefold Account. 1st In respect of his Divine Nature, as he is his Father so his God ; whence he is said to be God of God, as having his Nature communicated unto him by virtue of his Eternal Generation."

*Ibid.* Pag. 53. " He (the Son) is in his Person distinct from the Father ; another, not the Father, but yet the same in Nature, and this in all glorious Properties and Excellencies. This *Oneness* in Nature and *Distinction* in Person, may be well shaddowed out by these Expressions, *He is the Brightness of his Glory, and the express Image of his Person.* The Boldnes and Curiosity of the Schoolmen and some others, in expressing the Way and Manner of the Generation of the Son, by Similitudes of our Understanding, and its Acts, declaring how he is the Image of the Father, in their Terms, are intolerable and full of Offence ; nor is the rigid Imposition of these Words or Terms in this Matter, which they or others have found out to express it by, of any better Nature."

And Dr. Owen's *Greater Catechism*, Answer to *Quest.* III. of *Chap.* 3d. " It is the distinguishing Property of the Person of the Father to be of himself only the Fountain of the God-head, *John v. 26, 27. Eph. i. 3. Ibid Page 53.* He is in his Person distinct from the Father."



## The L I B E L.

Forasmuchas, according to the Scriptures and the Doctrine of this Church, contained in our Confession of Faith and Catechisms founded thereupon, our Blessed Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Second Person of the most Glorious and Adorable Trinity, is Very and Eternal God, of one Substance, and equal with the Father, and that in the Unity of the Godhead, there be Three Persons of one Substance, Power and Eternity, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, the Father being of None, neither begotten nor proceeding, the Son eternally begotten of the Father, and the Holy Ghost eternally proceeding from the Father and the Son ; which Three Persons are One True Eternal God, the same in Substance, equal in Power and Glory, altho' distinguished by their personal Properties aforesaid. LIKEAS, by the twelfth Act of the General Assembly of this Church, held in the Year One thousand seven hundred and ten, all Persons are discharged to vent any Opinion, contrary to any Head or Article of our *Confession of Faith* and *Catechisms* aforesaid, to use any Expressions in Relation to the Articles of Faith, not agreeable to the Form of sound Words, expressed in the Word of God, and the laid *Confession* and *Catechisms*, which are most valuable Pieces of our Reformation. And by the ninth Act of the General Assembly, held in the Year One thousand seven hundred and seventeen, You Mr. John Simson, Minister of the Gospel and Professor of Divinity in the University of Glasgow, are particularly prohibited and discharged to use such Expressions that do bear and are used by Adversaries in an unsound Sense, even tho' you should disown that unsound Sense, or to teach, preach, or otherwise vent Opinions, Propositions, or Hypotheses, not necessary to be taught in Divinity, and which give more Occasion to Strife, than to promote Edification : NEVERTHELESS, it is of Verity, that you the said Mr. John Simson are guilty of Impugning, or Disowning and Denying the foresaid Great, Necessary and Fundamental Truths of the Gospel, at least of undermining the same, and teaching, and venting, or maintaining Things inconsistent therewith, or tending to overturn the Belief of the said Blessed Truths, or to shake the Belief thereof, or to inject needless and ill-grounded Doubts and Scruples in the Minds of Men, and to render Men dark and uncertain, as to what they ought to believe concerning the same ; at least you have in teaching, or speaking, or writing, used such Expressions

pressions about the Truths aforesaid, that do bear and are used by Adversaries in an unsound Sense, or have vented such Opinions concerning the said Truths, as are not necessary to be taught in Divinity, and which give more Occasion to Strife than to promote Edification. IN SO FAR AS, You the said Mr. John Simson, did on one or other of the Days, of one or other of the Months, of one or other of the Years One thousand seven hundred and Twenty five, One thousand seven hundred and Twenty six, or of the bypast Months of the Year One thousand seven hundred and Twenty seven, Maintain, Teach or otherwise Vent the Opinions, Propositions or Hypotheses, or in Teaching or Speaking, used the Expressions, and proceeded as after mentioned, or used other Expressions or Propositions directly, and not by Inference, to the same Import ; *to wit*, You did alter your teaching concerning the Blessed Trinity, and particularly, That whereas you formerly used to give your Students the following Caution, *viz.* That the Term *Person*, when applied to the Blessed Three in the Godhead, was not to be taken precisely in the same Sense, as when spoken of Creatures, you forebore to give them the said Caution ; as also you have owned and acknowledged, that in speaking of our Lord Jesus Christ, you use not the Terms *Necessary-existence*, nor *Independency*, and gave this pretended Reason for it, That they are not mentioned concerning Christ in the Holy Scriptures, or our Confession of Faith, or the System you teach. And further, In teaching your Scholars you have said, That the *Independency* and *Necessary-existence* of our Lord Jesus Christ were Things we knew not ; That these Terms were impertinent, and not to be used in talking of the Trinity ; and that they were Philosophical Niceties, we know nothing about, and are ambiguous Terms of Art : And when your Students argued, that if the Son was not *Independent*, he was not *Necessarily-existent*, and so might not have been, and the Father might possibly have been without him ; you answered, How do you know, or how do we know that ? And yet further, in teaching your Students the *Chap. de Creatione*, in *Markii medulla theologiae christianaæ*, you said, That his Argument against the Eternity of the World, *viz.* That if Eternal, it must be *Necessarily-existent*, was not good, because *Christus est eternus, sed non ens necessarium, or non necessario existit* : As also, in teaching you gave it as your own Opinion, and the Judgment of the Primitive Fathers, that the Three Persons of the Trinity are not to be said to be either Numerically or Specifically one in Substance or Essence ; but added, They were so the same as to be one God in Three Persons ; but gave not any Name to, or attempted to give any Notion of that *Sameness* or *Oneness* ; nor can there be any but *Numerical Oneness* of Substance or Essence, consistent with the Godhead,

who

who is but One in Number, and not more; And you having asserted, That the Three Persons were all indeed one God, and had all the same Infinite Divine Perfections, you added, That whether the Subject of these Perfections was different, was a Metaphysical Question we need not determine; And you likewise affirm'd, That in the Trinity there are Three Intelligent Agents or Beings. As also you taught, That *Deus Pater est ante Deum Filium, non tempore sed causalitate*, and added the following Expression, *Ni supponamus Deum non posse creare ab eterno;* And likewise you have taught or vented, That *Self-existence, Necessary-existence, Independency, Supreme Deity*, and the Title of *the only true God*, may be taken, and were by some Authors taken in a Sense that includes the *personal Property* of the Father, and so not belonging to the Son; and tho' you said, that *Necessary existence, Independency, Supreme Deity*, and the Title of *the only true God*, might belong to the Son, in such Sense as included not the personal Property of the Father; yet you told not what that Sense was, but without doing so, you have inculcated the foresaid Distinction, as a Caution that may be necessary for Students, in reading both ancient and modern Authors, whether Friends or Adversaries to the Truth. And further you used to affirm, after insisting on the foresaid Distinction, with respect to the *Self-existence* of the Son, That you would take it as a Piece of useful Caution or Instruction both to you and the Students, if the Presbytery of Glasgow would declare the true Meaning of that English Term of Art, as you thought fit to call it, when it is to be affirmed of the Person of the Son; and you said the same of the Holy Ghost. All, or any of which, in so far as they may respectively infer all or any of the Errors, or unsound, dangerous and unsafe Ways of Teaching or Expressing above libelled, being found prov'd, you the said Mr. John Simson ought to be proceeded against with the Censures of the Church, according to the Deinereit and Quality of the Offence, which shall be prov'd; and that for your Instruction and just Correction, and to prevent the flowing in, and spreading of Error, and to preserve and maintain the Purity of the Doctrine of the Gospel in this Church.

At Appointment of the Presbytery,  
this is sign'd by

THO. ORR Cls. Pres.

Glasgow, March

30. 1727.

F 2

PAS.

PASSAGES of the Confession of Faith,  
and Catechism, with the Acts of Assembly,  
on which the Libel is founded.

Confession of Faith.

**C**HAP. II. Sect. 3. In the Unity of the God-head there be Three Persons, of one Substance, Power and Eternity; God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. The Father is of none, neither begotten nor proceeding; The Son is eternally begotten of the Father: The Holy Ghost is eternally proceeding from the Father and the Son.

Chap. VIII. Sect. 2. The Son of God, the second Person of the Trinity, being very and eternal God, of one Substance, and equal with the Father; did, &c;

Larger Catechism.

Quest. 9. **H**OW many Persons are there in the God-head?

Answ. There be Three Persons in the Godhead, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost: And these Three are one true eternal God, the same in Substance, equal in Power and Glory; although distinguished by their personal Properties.

ACTS of the General Assembly.

ACT for preserving the Purity of Doctrine.

At Edinburgh the 10th of May, 1710. Sess. 13.

**T**HE General Assembly considering, that the Purity of Doctrine is a signal Blessing to the Church of GOD, and that it hath been the great Happiness of this Church, ever since her Reformation from Popery, to have enjoyed and maintained the same; And that the avoiding all Expressions in Matters of Faith, contrary to the Form of sound Words, tends not a little to preserve the said Purity, which is so desirable; And it being informed, that in some Places, some Expressions are used, and Opinions as to some Points of Religion vented, which are not agreeable to our Confession of Faith and Catechisms,

chisms, and the known Sentiments of the greatest Lights, and most famous Gospel Ministers, wherewith this Church hath been bleſſed ; Therefore the General Assembly does discharge all Persons, to vent any Opinions contrary to any Head or Article of the said Confession and Catechisms, or use any Expressions in relation to the Articles of Faith, not agreeable to the Form of ſound Words, expressed in the Word of GOD, and the Confefſion of Faith and Catechisms of this Church, which are most valuable Pieces of her Reformation : And the General Aſemblу does hereby further Enact, That no Minister or Member of this Church, presume to print, or diſperſe in Writ, any Catechism, without the Allowance of the Presbytery of the Bounds, and of the Commission ; And the Presbytery is hereby appointed to lay any ſuch Catechism before the Commission ; And the General Aſemblу does enjoin and require Synods and Presbyteries, carefully to advert to the Obſervation of this Act, and that they notice the Transgrefſors thereof.

*ACT for maintaining the Purity of the Doctrine of this Church, and determining the Process, Mr. James Webster against Mr. John Simfon,*

*Edinburgh, 14th May, 1717, Seſſ. 12.*

THE General Assembly conſidering, That much of their Time has been ſpent upon the Proceſſes pursued by Mr. James Webster, one of the Ministers of Edinburgh, againſt Mr. John Simfon Professor of Divinity in the College of Glasgow, aid before them by the Report of the Committee for Purity of Doctrine ; and that they cannot overtake the Whole, by diſcuffing particularly every Article, it being nevertheless expedient and requisite, That this Affair be brought to ſome Iſſue, that may teſtify the Zeal and Concern of this Aſembly, for the Prelevation of Truth and Peace in this Church, and preventing what may tend to the Hurt and Prejudice thereof ; Therefore, altho' Professor Simfon does declare his Adherence to our Confefſion of Faith, and Doctrines therein contain'd as his Judgment, and his diſowning the Errors opposite hereto, wherewith he was charged; yet conſidering, That by his printed Answers, and the Letters written by him, to the now deceaſt Mr. Robert Rowan, ſometime Minister at Penninghame, and his Letter to the foreſaid Committee for Purity of Doctrine, dated the Fourteenth of April, One thousand even hundred and fifteen Years, he hath given Offence, and that it is judged, That therein he hath vented ſome Opinions

not

not necessary to be taught in Divinity, and that have given more Occasion to Strife, than to the promoting of Edification, That he hath used some Expressions, that bear, and are used by Adversaries, in a bad and unsound Sense, tho' he doth disown that unsound Sense; And for answering more satisfactorily (as he supposeth) the Cavils and Objections of Adversaries, he hath adopted some Hypotheses different from what are commonly used among Orthodox Divines, that are not evidently founded on Scripture, and tend to attribute too much to natural Reason and the Power of corrupt Nature, which undue Advancement of Reason and Nature, is always to the Disparagement of Revelation and efficacious free Grace. The General Assembly, for the Reasons above-mentioned, Prohibits, and Discharges the said Mr. John Simson to use such Expressions, or to teach, preach, or otherwise vent such Opinions, Propositions, or Hypotheses as aforesaid: And as concerning the Parties in this Process, whatever Complaints have been made as to the Manner of raising or managing this Process on either Hand, the General Assembly for Peace's Sake, do overlook and pass these without further insisting thereon, and do discharge any Prosecution on either Side on these Accounts; And further, for the more effectual preserving the Purity of Doctrine and Peace of this Church, and preventing Strife and contentious Debates, which are prejudicial to Truth, brotherly Love, and the Life of serious Religion; The General Assembly extends the foresaid Prohibition to all Professors of Divinity Ministers and Preachers, and all others in this Church; and particularly, the General Assembly discharges them to vent any Doctrines not agreeable to our Confession of Faith and Catechisms, especially such Opinions as either ascribe too much to corrupt Nature, or tend to encourage Sloth among Christians, or slacken Peoples Obligation unto Gospel Holiness. And moreover, the General Assembly recommends to all Faculties in Universities, and to all Presbyteries within this Church, to see this Act observed by all the Persons foresaid within their several Jurisdictions, and to censure the Contraveners as they shall see Cause: And the General Assembly impowers their Commission to give Advice to Presbyteries and to judge in Causes and Cases of that Kind, that shall be brought before them, and when any such Cases shall happen, The General Assembly hereby appoints Presbyteries to acquaint the Commission before they proceed to any Sentence of Suspension, or Deposition against any Person that shall come to be tried in Prosecution of this Act.



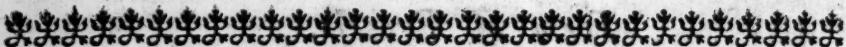
### Form of Process.

*Chap. 7. § 3. Acts of Assemb. 1707, Page 30.* And because a Scandal committed by a Minister hath on these Accounts many Aggravations, and once raised, though it may be found to be without any Ground, yet it is not easily wipt off; therefore a Presbytery would exactly ponder by whole Information and Complaint it comes first before them, and a Presbytery is not so far to receive the Information, as to proceed to the Citation of a Minister, or any Way begin the Process, until there be first some Person, who under his Hand gives in the Complaint, with some Account of its Probability, and undertakes to make out the Libel. 2d<sup>o</sup>, Or at least do before the Presbytery undertake to make it out, under the Pain of being censured as Slanderers. Or, 3d<sup>o</sup>, That the *fama clamosa* of the Scandal be so great, as that the Presbytery, for their own Vindication, see themselves necessitate to begin the Process, without any particular Accuser: But the Presbytery in this Case would be careful, First, To enquire into the Rise, Occasion, Broachers and Grounds of this *fama clamosa*.

*Ibid. § 8.* If the Matter laid to the Minister's Charge be such Practices, as, in their own Nature, manifestly subvert that Order, Unity and Peace, which Christ hath established in his Church, or Unsoundness and Heterodoxy in Doctrine, then great Caution would be used, and the Knowledge and Understanding of Witneses much look'd unto; and withal, if the Errors be not gross, and striking at the Vitals of Religion, or if they be not pertinaciously stuck unto, or industriously spread, with a visible Design to corrupt, or that the Errors are not spreading among the People, then Lenitives, Admonitions, Instructions and frequent Conferences are to be tried to reclaim without cutting off, and the Advice of other Presbyteries sought, and unless the Thing be doing much Hurt, so as it admits of no Delay, the Synod or General Assembly may be advised with in the Affair, and the same intimate to the Minister concerned.



O B S E R V A -



**OBJECTIONS by Mr. JOHN SIMSON,  
Professor of Divinity in the University of Glas-  
gow, against the Frame of the Libel ex-  
hibited against him, and now lying before the  
Reverend Presbytery of Glasgow.**

**T**HE Defendant having for a good many Years lived in Peace and Friendship with his Reverend Brethren in the Presbytery of Glasgow, and having with much Comfort heartily joined with them in promoting the Interests of the Gospel, and the Concerns of the Kingdom of our Glorious Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; he cannot without much Regret and sensible Grief, reflect on his present unhappy Circumstances, which a wise and righteous God has thought fit in his Holy Providence to bring him unto, by Misunderstandings and Mistakes, that have crept in by Degrees, between his Reverend Brethren and him for some Years past, especially during his great bodily Indisposition, since October 1724. And altho' he be not conscious to himself of any just Ground he has given for it, yet after several other Methods of Procedure against him, on which he makes here no Reflexion, they have found themselves in Conscience obliged, as in Charity he believes, to exhibite against him a Libel upon a *fama clamosa*, containing a Charge of his having taught or vented Errors, contrary to the Holy Scriptures, and some Passages of the *Confession of Faith* and *Larger Catechism* of this Church, relating to the Doctrine of the *Blessed Trinity*, and in Violation of 12 *Act, Gen. Assemb.* 1710, and 9. *Act of Gen. Assemb. 1717*, as the said Libel more fully bears.

To support which Charge, it is alledged he has, within the Time specified in the said Libel, in teaching, speaking or writing, used several Propositions or Expressions mentioned in the said Libel.

Concerning which Libel he must observe, *First*, That the Passages of Scripture, our Confession and Catechism therein-mentioned, are what he steadfastly believes and yearly teaches; and as in former Years, so likewise these two last Sessions of the College, he has carefully taught them, according to the plain and common Meaning of the Words, and endeavoured to prove the Truth and great Importance of them to the best of his Skill, and to confute the Errors that are opposed to them, or inconsistent with them, as is narrated in his Letter

to the Presbytery, the 2d of March last Year ; the Truth of which Narration has not as yet been called in Question, so far as he knows.

Secondly, He observes in the Frame of the said Libel manifold Uncertainties, Imperfections, and Mistakes, which render it null and void in Law, upon which no Process ought to be sustained. Such as,

1st, That there is no Place mentioned in the Libel where 'tis alledged any of the Facts were done, or Expressions uttered. This of it self would cast a Libel before the Lords of Justiciary : And this Libel being manifestly of a criminal Nature, which would deprive the Defendant, not only of his Reputation, but of his Office and Benefice, were it proved that he had impugned or denied any of the necessary Truths mentioned in the Narrative of the said Libel, or taught any Thing inconsistent with them : Upon which Account this Libel ought to be rejected by the Reverend Presbytery, or so reformed as to make it legal, before he be obliged to give any further Answers to it.

2dly, The Time specified in the Libel contains two Years preceeding the First of January last, and Three Months following it ; whereas Libels before other Courts are confined to a Year. But what he chiefly observes is, That this Libel is founded upon a *fama clamosa*, which was raised, and the alledged Occasion of it happened betwixt Martinmas 1725, and May 1726 ; the Grounds of which *Fama* the Presbytery were appointed to enquire into, and a Committee was appointed to assist them therein, by the Act of the last General Assembly concerning the Defendant : Therefore all the Space of Time mentioned, at least preceeding Martinmas 1725, and since last Assembly, cannot be legally comprehended in this Libel, that proceeds upon a *fama clamosa*, the Defendant having taught none since last Assembly, before the 10th of October last, and there has been no *fama clamosa* of his having taught Error since that Time, the least Notice whereof has come to his Ears ; wherefore if any Articles of the said Libel relate to what he has taught since October last, they ought either to instruct there has been a new *Fama* raised, and lay before him the particular Articles thereof, or exhibite no such Articles against him, unless the Accusation be signed by an Accuser, or some Person undertake to prove it under Pain of Censure, according to the good Rules in our Form of Process, Cap. VII. Sect. 3d. Unless they be Articles declared to be taken out of his Papers given in to the Presbytery, which is no where plainly asserted in the Libel.

3dly, The Expressions said to be uttered by the Defendant in teaching, are laid in such ambiguous and incoherent Terms, that tho' it were proved he had uttered them, which he is persuaded cannot be done ; yet they could afford no certain Documents, either of what was his Opinion, or what he had taught, unless the

Libel did specify the preceeding and following Parts of his Discourse, and whether he spoke them as his own or other Mens Opinion, which are necessary to determine his Sense in uttering them ; which not being done in the Libel, renders the Meaning of these Expressions so uncertain, as to be uncapable of a legal Proof, especially after the elapsing of 14 or 15 Months since the Thing can be supposed to have happened : For at this Rate, he might be accused of gross Error, yea Blasphemy, or Atheism, had he been barely reciting some Texts of Scripture, of which the Hearers remembred only some Scrapes, such as, *There is no God : Curse God and die ; you see then, how that by Works a Man is justified*, and the like.

4tby, The Libel does not mention any particular Passage of Scripture, of our Confession of Faith, or Catechisms which are impugned or denied by any of the Expressions alledged, or with which they are inconsistent ; nor is there any standing Rule mentioned, which is alledged to be particularly violated by any of the said Expressions, which the Presbytery in Justice did oblige Mr. Webster, in a former Case, to do : And they having no Interest in this Libel, founded on a *fama clamosa*, but what the vindicating of themselves and the Truth calls them to, the Defendant cannot but expect, from their Equity as Judges, that they will do him the same Justice now as formerly, in not sustaining this Libel, as a sufficient Ground of Proces against him, at least, till this Defect be made up.

5tby, There are some Expressions said to be uttered by the Defendant, which are both contrary to his fixed Opinion, and what he fully taught on these Subjects ; and as he remembers not his having uttered such Expressions, he is perswaded, that such Allegances must either flow from a Mistake of some of the Hearers, or else from a Trip in his Expression, mentioning one Word for another, which is no doubt incident to him, no less than it is to much greater Men, when discoursing an Hour or two on several Points of Divinity ; and 'tis but reasonable to think he should have been more liable to it, the preceeding Session of the College, when he laboured under so great Indisposition and Weakness of Body, which could not but hinder his clos Attention, either in thinking or speaking.

Of this Sort is that Instance, that he said, That Professor *Mark's* Argument against the Eternity of the World, to wit, *That if Eternal it must be Necessarily-existent, was not good*, because *Christus est eternus sed non ens necessarium* ; where the Defendant was shewing that Professor *Mark's* Argument was not good against Aristotle and his Defenders, who maintain, that the World was created from Eternity, and so maintained, that *mundus est eternus, sed non ens necessarium*, which Argument doth only contradict what these Authors assert ; an therefore

fore is not a good Argument to confute their Opinion, which the Defendant has been in use to notice every Year since he taught that Book ; and is perswaded, that if any of his Hearers alledge, that he said *Christus est eternus, sed non ens necessarium*, that either he has mistaken the Word *Christus* for *Mundus*, or that by a Trip in Expression, the Defendant has said *Christus* for *Mundus*, which he is not sensible he did, the Word *Christus* being plainly impertinent to the Argument he was then upon.

Another Expression of the same Nature is, *Deus Pater est ante Deum Filium, non tempore sed causalitate*; and added the following Expression, *Ni supponamus Deum non posse creare ab eterno*. The Defendant referring what he has to say on the first Part of this to his particular Answers to all the Articles alledged, to be given in afterwards, if needful, he is perswaded he did not use that last Expression, it being inconsistent with his fixed Opinion, and with what he fully taught on the Subject, to which the former Part of this Instance seems to have a Relation ; and therefore judges, that if any of the Hearers alledge he uttered this Expression, they have, thro' not hearing distinctly, or otherwise, mistaken *creare* for *generare*, or else that he has uttered the one Expression for the other by a Mistake ; the Word *generare* being to the Purpose of the Argument, and the other wholly impertinent.

6thly, It is alledged, That the Defendant has owned and acknowledged such or such Things, and that likewise he has taught or vented, that *Self-existence, &c.* — without telling when, where, or what Way he has owned or vented such Things, which puts him at a Disadvantage, or renders it impossible for him, to give any certain Answer thereto. From all which, the Defendant pleads, that the said Libel is null and void in Law, and such as cannot be a sufficient Ground of a just and legal Process ; and therefore craves, that the said Libel may be either rejected, and he vindicated and dismissed ; or, if the Reverend Presbytery think they have just Ground of Procedure against him, that they reform the said Libel, and make up the said Defects, Imperfections, &c. here justly complained of, so as a plain and certain Charge may be given in against him; which done, he declares himself willing and ready, to give distinct and particular Answers thereto.





*ANSWERS and DEFENCES for Mr.  
JOHN SIMSON, Professor of Divinity in  
the University of Glasgow, against the Libel  
exhibited against him, and now lying before  
the Reverend Presbytery of Glasgow.*

THE said Mr. John Simson, saving to himself all Manner of Objections or Exceptions competent against the said Libel, and particularly adhering to the Objections given in to the Reverend Presbytery against the Form of the same, upon the 11th Instant; and also adhering to his Protest taken against the Interlocutors of the Presbytery, repelling the said Objections, and Reference being had to the said Objections, which are herein holden as repeated, and taken as a Part of his full Answers to the said Libel, does now proceed in humble Manner to lay before the Reverend Presbytery, what, in his Opinion, may be a full and satisfactory Answer to every Allegation contained in the Libel.

Only it appearing to him that the second Allegation in the Libel, which says, *You owned and acknowledged, &c.* is taken out of his Letter to the Presbytery of the 2d of March last Year, or out of his Answers to the Presbytery's References, given in the 5th of January last; he humbly desires the Reverend Presbytery may allow him to delay answering that Article, until he has first answered all these said to be vented in teaching, and then to give Answers to the said Allegation, as the first that appears to him to be vented by Writing.

The first Allegation is, " You did alter your Teaching concerning the *Blessed Trinity*, and particularly, that whereas as you formerly used to give your Students the following Caution, viz. That the Term *Person*, when applied to the Blessed Three in the Godhead, was not to be taken precisely in the same Sense, as when spoken of Creatures, you forbore to give them the said Caution."

To which the Defendant answers, 1st, That he hopes it is no Crime that he altered his Teaching, unless the Alteration contains something that is prejudicial to that important Doctrine.

2dly, His omitting the Caution alledged can be no Crime, unless joined with persuading the Students of something faulty in Opposition to it, which the Libel does not say he did; He might omit it thro' Forgetfulness, or because liable

to Exceptions from some People, or because needless ; seeing it may be easily understood from the Words of our *Confession* and *Catechisms*, teaching the Three Persons to be One God and from what he taught of their not being Individuals of the same Species, which would make them Three Gods. Whence it appears, that the Term *Person* is either not taken precisely in the same Sense, as when applied to Creatures ; or, as Dr<sup>y</sup> Waterland chooses to speak, " They are Persons in the same common Sense of *Person* ; but Persons of a different Kind and differently circumstantiated from what human or angelical or any other Kinds of Persons are, 2d *Defence*, Page 369." And the said Author calls the Persons of the Trinity, " A different Kind of Persons, because they are undivided, and not separate from each other in Nature, Substance and Existence, *ibid.* Page 366."

The Defendant also observes, That the Caution alledged is not, so far as he remembers, agreeable either to his Way of speaking or thinking ; wherefore he pleads, that this Allegation is neither relevant nor true.

A second Thing alledged to be vented in teaching is, " And further in teaching your Scholars you have said, That the *Independency* and *Necessarily-existence* of our Lord Christ, were Things we knew not ; that these Terms were impertinent, and not to be used in talking of the *Trinity*, and that they were Philosophical Niceties we knew nothing about, and are ambiguous Terms of Art ; and when your Students argued, that if the Son was not *Independent*, he was not *Necessarily-existent*, and so might not have been, and the Father might possibly have been without him ; You answered, How do you, or how do we know that ? "

To which the Defendant answers, 1st, This Heap of Sayings alledged, without mentioning the Occasion, Reason or Circumstances of their being uttered, render them, in his Opinion, incapable of a distinct Answer or legal Proof, especially after more than fifteen Months elapsed, since the Thing can be supposed to have happened ; it relating, so near as he can guess, to an Objection proposed by a Student in December 1725, or January 1726.

2dly, If it relate to that Objection, he is persuaded that the Terms he then said were not pertinent or safe, were only the Terms *Dependent* and *Independent*, *Co-ordinate* or *Subordinate*, and that they were only so, when applied to the personal Properties and Relations of the Divine Persons, (*namely*, when compared with one another) as is mentioned in his said Letter ; at writing whereof, he had a pretty distinct Remembrance, both of the Objection and Answer ; yet he had not then the least Remembrance or Suspicion, that he had then, or at any former Occasion, mentioned the Term *Necessarily-existent*

*srent or Necessary Being*: And he not having met with that Student, from his proposing that Objection, till a little after his said Letter was read in the Presbytery, he asked him, whether the Letter did not fairly represent that Matter; which the Student owned it did. But he spake nothing of the other Things alledged in this Article, nor does the Defendant remember any Thing of them, nor had he the least Hint of such Things being talked of him, until he heard them read in the Libel the 30th of *March* last; and therefore humbly thinks, that if any of his Hearers have talk'd such Things to others of him, without acquainting himself thereof, as he is positive none of them did, they ought to be look'd upon as *Raisers or Broachers of the fama clamosa against him*.

3dly, What is alledged in this Article, beyond or beside what he owns in his said Letter and Answers, is not agreeable to his Opinion and usual Manner of speaking on that Subject. But in case such an Objection as the last had been proposed, which he remembers nothing of, the Answer said to be given thereto, *How know you that?* May be constructed to import a strong Denial, or the gross Unreasonableness of making such Inferences or Suppositions, which is agreeable to his Opinion. Wherefore he pleads, that there is nothing relevant in this Allegation, so far as he remembers any Thing of it. But if any of his Hearers shall be positive and express, that any Thing has escaped him, then or at any other Time, contrary to what he has owned in his said Letter and Answers, and may be in the least prejudicial to the *Truth*, he disclaims it, and pleads that it ought to be construed a Trip or Mistake in Expression, which is incident to him, as it is to much greater Men. Besides, he does not perceive that it could be called either an impugning or denying, or teaching what is inconsistent with, or tending to lessen the Belief of any of the great, necessary and fundamental Truths, cited from our Confession and Catechism in the Libel; tho' he had called several of the School-Terms, that are neither used in Scripture, nor our Confession of Faith, *ambiguous Terms of Art*; and tho' he had called Debates about them *Philosophical Niceties*; He says, supposing he had done so, which he does not remember he did, he had thereby observed the Injunctions of the A&ts of Assembly cited in the Libel, by even discouraging the Students from using such Expressions and Hypotheses, as are not necessary to be taught in Divinity, and give more Occasion to Strife than to promote Edification.

A Third Allegation is, *And yet further in teaching your Students the Chap. de Creatione, in Markii Medulla Theologiae Christianae, you said, That his Argument against the Eternity of the World, viz. That if Eternal, it must be Necessarily-existent,*

ent, was not good, because Christus est eternus, sed non ens necessarium, or non necessario existit.

To which the Defendant answers, *First*, That altho' this Article, being so far better laid than the others, that it tells the particular Subject he was treating of, yet it is neither express in his Words, nor gives a true Account of his Meaning; for in teaching the System, he always speaks *Latin*, and a Hearer's translating any Part of his Words into *English*, can bear no Faith in Judgment, because they may be wrong translated, and his Testimony cannot be an Evidence of what was Fact, or really said by the Defendant, but only of his own Judgment about it, fifteen Months or more after the Thing happened.

*2dly*, So far as the Defendant's Memory serves him, he has yearly made a Remark on this Argument from the first Year he taught this Book: The Argument is this, *Mundus non potuit ab eterno creari, quia ens eternum est necessarium & independens*, which he thinks not sufficient to refute the Opinion of *Aristotle*, and the Schoolmen that seem to defend him, whom Professor *Mark* mentions in the 19th *Sect.* of *Chap. 8. de Creatione* of his *Compendium Theologiae*, where he treats of the same Subject; the *Chapters* and *Sections* of the *Compendium* and *Mendulla* being throughout the whole correspondent to one another. Now *Aristotle* and these other Philosophers, having thought that the World was created from Eternity, did, according to this Opinion, maintain that *Mundus est eternus, sed non est ens necessarium & independens*; which Opinion is only contradicted by the foresaid Argument; and therefore it is not sufficient to refute it. Whether any of the Students have, thro' not hearing distinctly, heard, or otherwise mistaken, *Christus est eternus*, for *Mundus est eternus*, &c. the Defendant knows not; but he is persuaded, that he did not say, *Christus est eternus, sed non ens necessarium*, because it is neither agreeable to his Opinion, nor the Argument he was then speaking of: But if any shall be express and positive that he used the Word *Christus*, (which he does not remember he did) it ought to be construed to have been a Trip in Speaking, which kind of Trips are incident to him as they are to others, who are much greater Men than he. On the foresaid Account, he has always found it needful to insist further, in proving to the Students, that the World could not be created from Eternity. And, as he had often formerly, so perhaps also these two last Sessions of the College, tho' he cannot be positive, he has taken Notice of what Professor *Markius* justly observes in his said *Compendium Theologiae*, in the End of the said 19th *Sect.* of the 8th *Chap. de Creatione*, namely, Of the utter Disparity there is between Christ the Son of God's Generation from Eternity, and the World's being created from Eternity; which some of the foresaid Authors would make use of as an Argument for their Opinion,

nion, which is rather a good Argument to refute it, because the *Eternal Son of God* is neither created nor made, but begotten; and he being infinitely perfect, as God the Father is, not only may be, but must also be absolutely eternal, as the Holy Scriptures declare him to be, calling him the *First and the Last*, &c. Whereas the World or System of the Creatures, taken by Parts or altogether, is finite and of finite Perfections, precarious and contingent; and therefore is not capable of infinite or illimitied Duration, without Beginning or End.

Wherefore there is nothing in this Allegation relevant, unless what may have happened, either thro' the Mistake of some Hearers, or a Mistake in the Defendant's Expressions should be taken for a Crime, which he persuades himself the Justice of the Presbytery and Assembly will not allow them to do.

The Fourth Thing alledged is, *As also in Teaching, you gave it as your own Opinion, and the Judgment of the Primitive Fathers, That the Three Persons in the Trinity are not to be said to be either numerically or specifically One in Substance or Essence; but added, That they were so the same, as to be one God in Three Persons; but gave not any Name to, nor attempted to give any Notion of that Sameness or Oneness, nor can there be any but numerical Oneness of Substance or Essence consistent with the Godhead, who is but one in Number, and not more.*

*Answ. 1st.* This Allegation has the same Fault with most of the Rest, that it does not mention what the Defendant was then teaching; yet by the Matter of it, it seems to relate to what he said in explaining our *Confession*, Cap. II. Sect. 3d. particularly these Words, *Of one Substance*, and it gives a very lame and unfair Representation of what he said.

*2dly,* The Defendant owns he said, That the Three Persons in the Trinity are not to be said to be either numerically, or specifically one in Substance, as these Terms of Aristotle's Philosophy are commonly used among us when applied to Creatures: But denies that he used the Word *Essence*, either numerical or specifical; and the Reason he gave why the Persons of the Trinity were not to be said specifically one in Substance only, was, that according to the common Use of that Term of Art, they would be Three Gods, as Three human Persons are Three Men. And the Reason why the Father, Son and Holy Ghost could not safely be said to be numerically one in Substance, according to the common Use of that Term when applied to Creatures that are Intelligent, was that in that Sense it would signify they were but one Person; wherefore our Divines having said, *in the Unity of the Godhead there be three Persons of one Substance*; they could not be thought to mean, either one specifical Substance, or one Substance in Number, as these Terms are commonly used in our Philosophy when applied to Intelligent Creatures; because the former would make them

them Three Gods, contrary to the Unity of the Godhead there asserted; and the latter would make but one Person, contrary to the Assertion of Three Persons. Wherefore they wisely abstained from both these Terms of Art, which, according to their usual Meaning, were apt to mislead People into Error on either Hand; and say *the Three Persons are of one Substance*, as do all the other Confessions of the Protestant and Reformed Churches. And if it be said, what then is the Meaning of these Words, *In the Unity of the Godhead there be Three Persons of one Substance?* The Answer is, They are so far distinct Persons, as that the incommunicable Properties, Characters and Actions ascribed to them in the Word of God must truly agree to them. And on the other Hand they must be so one among themselves, as to be but one true eternal God, in Opposition to a Plurality of Gods, of one Substance, in such a Way as is consistent with the said Distinction of their Persons, in Opposition to their being but one Person, the Nature and Measure of which Distinction and Oneness is not revealed in God's Word, which alone teaches us this Doctrine; and herein lies the *Mystery* of it, That the *Manner thereof is kept secret*, and perhaps we have no Faculties in this mortal State capable of rightly conceiving it, nor Terms fit for expressing it.

Wherefore the Defendant pleads, that what he said concerning the Persons of the Trinity not being to be said either to be *specifically* or *numerically*, one in Substance, according to the common Use of these Terms as applied to intelligent Creatures, according as he has truly represented it, is so far from being a Crime, that he humbly conceives the Reverend Presbytery will judge it was his Duty.

But there seems in this Article to be another Fault charged on the Defendant, tho' it be not directly said; namely, *That he gave not any Name to, nor attempted to give any Notion of that Sameness or Oneness.* To which he answers, 1st, 'Tis true he did not, for the foresaid Reasons; to which he begs, Leave to add, That herein he followed the Example of our Blessed Lord and Master, who says, *John x. 30. I and my Father are one, εἰ εἰσμεν*, without giving any Name to, or giving any Notion of that *Oneness*; which is also followed by the Apostle *John*, in his first Epistle v. 7. where he says of *the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost, and these Three are one, εἰ εἰσιν*, without adding any Name to, or giving any Notion of that *Oneness*.

2dly, He herein follows our own Confession, and these of the other Protestant and Reformed Churches, who say, *the Three Divine Persons are of one or the same Substance*, without giving a Name to, or more particular Notion of that *Sameness or Oneness*.

3dly, He has herein followed the Example of some Divines, famous for their Zeal, Skill and Prudence in defending the Doctrine of the Blessed Trinity. He needs only at Present give one Instance of this out of Dr. Calamy's Sermons concerning the Doctrine of the Trinity Page 272. Prop. 8th. Whereas among those that own this Distinction to be real and not imaginary only, it is by some asserted to be modal, while others affirm it to be essential; and some contend that it is specifical only, while others will have it to be numerical. I not being able to find any such Words as these in the Bible, am for dropping them in the Debate. I am a great Enemy to darkning Counsel by Words without Knowledge, and running into Heats about different Ways of Expression, where the Thing meant may be the same.

4thly, Some of these Divines teach, that altho' the Three Divine Persons have one undivided and inseparable Essence, yet each of them is, "Substantia per se subsistens, individua, incommunicabilis; adde hic intelligens, vivens, agens, ut vera sit persona." Zanch. de Trib. Elocit. Par. 1. Cap. 2. Col. 12, 13. and Cap. 4. Col. 16, 17. where he makes a great Difference between one undivided Essence, which is common to all the Divine Persons, and one Substance in Number that is peculiar to each of them. And because I find famous Divines and zealous Friends of the Truth differ so much about the Meaning and Use of these Terms, I carefully avoid confounding one undivided, inseparable Essence, with one Substance in Number.

5thly, This Phrase, one Substance in Number, is used by Adversaries of the Truth in an unsound Sense; as in the Second Collection of Socinian Tracts, Tract last, called, Considerations on the Explications of the Doctrine of the Trinity, by Dr. Wallis, Dr. Sherlock, Dr. South, &c. Page 24, 25. I ask, have the Three (pretended) Divine Persons each his own proper, peculiar and personal Understanding, Will and Energy? — Or have the Three Persons but one only self-same Understanding, Will and Energy in Number, as there is but one self-same Substance in Number? If he (Dr. South) saith the former, he — is guilty of Tritheism. — But if he denies that there are Three (All-knowing, Almighty) Understandings, Wills and Energies, he is a Socinian, he has granted to us the Point in Controversy; he grants the whole that we contend for, — so long as he grants but one (Omnipotent) Energy and Will, and but one (All-knowing) Understanding or Wisdom. If this be granted to us, 'tis plain to every one who gives but never so little Heed, that the Question about Three Persons is a mere Strife of Words.

From all which the Defendant is humbly of Opinion that by the Omission alledged, he has exactly observed both Parts of the Prohibition contained in Alt 5th, General Assembly 1717, by forbearing Expressions that are used by Adversaries in an unsound

ound Sense; and by forbearing to teach Propositions, or Hypotheses, or Opinions not needful to be taught in Divinity, and which give more Occasion to Strife than to promote Edification, seeing he has gone no further than Scripture and our Confession go; and he knows no other Rule by which to judge what is needful or not needful to be taught in Divinity: And this appears to be the Rule intimated in *Act 12th. General Assembly 1710.* cited in the Libel, printed Page 44.

As to the last Words of this Article, *Nor can there be any but numerical Oneness of Substance or Essence consistent with the Godhead, who is but one in Number and no more;* They not being plainly alledged to be his, he does not think himself obliged to give any Answer to them.

From the whole he pleads, That there is nothing Relevant in this Article, when taken in its true Meaning, determined by the other Parts of his Discourse, as mentioned in this Answer now given thereto.

A Fifth Allegation is, *And you having asserted, that the Three Persons were all indeed one God, and had all the same infinite Perfections,* you added, *That whether the Subject of these Perfections was different, was a Metaphysical Question we need not determine.*

To which the Defendant answers 1st, That there is here no Account given of what he was teaching when he is said to have uttered the last Words of this Article (*you added &c.*) which he supposes is the only Thing complained of; and therefore, so long after the Thing is past, is neither capable of a distinct Answer, nor Proof of its certain Meaning.

2dly, He does not remember that he spoke these Words, and thinks he did not, because they are neither agreeable to his Opinion, nor Way of speaking on that Subject; and he humbly conceives it is a mistaken and wrong Representation about one Substance in Number, to which he has given a full Answer on the preceeding Allegation.

The Sixth Allegation is, *And you likewise affirmed, that in the Trinity there are Three Intelligent Agents or Beings.*

To which the Defendant answers 1st, That this Article gives no Account of the Occasion and Circumstances needful to determine the Meaning of the Words, and as they are here laid, he denies them to be his.

2dly, He remembers, that in explaining the Word Person in our Confession, and the Word Persona in the System, he tells that the Meaning of these Terms, in their usual and proper Acceptation, is an intelligent Agent: But he purposely avoids the Words Being, Substance, Spirit, Mind; because, as he thinks, they are commonly used to signify an intelligent Agent that has one Substance in Number, distinct and divided from every other Intelligent Agent or Person. And altho' he finds some of

these Terms, such as *individual intelligent Substance* applied to each of the Persons of the Trinity, by celebrated Defenders of that important Doctrine, as by Zanchius; yet he carefully avoids both this and these other Terms, because he does not find them so used and applied, either in the Scriptures or our Confession of Faith; and they seem to relate to the Manner how they are Three Persons, which is not revealed.

3dly, So far as the Defendant can learn the proper Meaning of the English Word, *Person* is an Agent or intelligent Agent, which properly signifies a living, understanding, active Principle of working or doing, to which any Work or Deed done is ascribed as to its particular Cause: In which Sense the Word is taken Heb. i. 3. where it is meant of the Person of the Father, where he is manifestly distinguished from the Person of the Son; which Use of the Word *Person* is given as a principal Reason, why it is used in our own and other Confessions of Faith, and by many of our most celebrated Divines that are zealous Defenders of this Doctrine: To which they justly add, That the three Divine Persons are in many Places of God's Word design'd by such Words, and represented as doing such different Works, as are used in the Hebrew and Greek Tongues to signify what we use to express by the Terms *distinct Persons* or *intelligent Agents*. A few of which that shew the Importance of our believing the Distinction of the Divine Persons, by an irritant Clause added to them, the Defendant thinks only needful to mention: Such as John iii. 16, 18. compared, *For God so loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish but have everlasting Life.* — *He that believeth not, is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the Name of the only begotten Son of God.* And ver. 35, 36. *The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all Things into his Hand. He that believeth on the Son, hath everlasting Life.* And he that believeth not the Son, shall not see Life, but the Wrath of God abideth on him, 1 John ii. 22, 23. *He is the Antichrist that denieth the Father and the Son; whosoever denieth the Son hath not the Father,* 1 John iv. 9, 10. In this was manifested the Love of God towards us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the World, that we might live thro' him. Herein is Love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the Propitiation for our Sins, 1 John v. 10, 11. *He that believeth on the Son of God, hath the Witness in himself: He that believeth not God, hath made him a Liar, because he believeth not the Record that God gave of his Son.* And this is the Record, that God hath given to us eternal Life: And this Life is in his Son, ver. 12. *He that hath the Son hath Life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not Life.* Math. x. 32, 33. *Whosoever therefore shall confess me before Men,*

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Men, him will I also confess before my Father which is in Heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before Men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in Heaven.

4thly, The Father, Son and Holy Ghost are, in our Confession of Faith and Catechisms, both in the Passages cited in the Libel, and in other Places, called *three Persons*, without the least Hint given, that the Word is not to be taken in its proper Meaning; in which Sense therefore I must explain it, unless I would lay my self open to a Charge of undermining that important Doctrine: Especially seeing the Divine Persons, both in Scripture and our Confession, are as plainly represented to be distinct intelligent Agents, as they are therein represented to be any Way whatsoever distinguished from one another, e. g. *The Father is of None, neither begotten nor proceeding, and begets the Son; the Son is eternally begotten of the Father; and the Holy Ghost eternally proceeding from the Father and the Son.* *The Father creates the World by his Son, who being employ'd, not as a Servant or subordinate Instrument, but as his own Son, indued with infinite Perfections, as the efficient Cause for performing that great and honourable Work, which manifests the eternal Power and Godhead both of the Father and the Son; as his garnishing the Heavens by his Spirit, does the same of the Holy Ghost.* What is also said of the three Divine Persons in the viii. Chap. and other Places of our Confession, concerning the different Parts they act in the glorious Work of our Redemption, represents them as proper Persons or distinct intelligent Agents.

5thly, The Defendant might also shew, were it needful, that the Words *Persona*, *Hypostasis* and *προσωπον* have been used by the most zealous Defenders of the Doctrine of the *Blessed Trinity* in all Ages of the Church, to signify an *Intelligent Agent*, and have been defined in this Sense even by the *Popish Schoolmen*, who have explained it away again, or contradicted it in their Metaphysical Dissertations and Debates about it. Likewise all the ancient Creeds before the *Nicene*, and that, and the following *Catholick Creeds*, represent the Father, Son and Holy Ghost as *Three proper Persons or intelligent Agents*, tho' they who owned these Creeds, were on this Account callumniated by the *Sabellians* and *Arians* as *Tritheists*.

The Defendant might also mention a great Cloud of Witnesses among our Protestant Writers; he has already named *Zanchius*, and shall only add Two or Three more.

Dr. Owen, in his Book of *The Doctrine of the Trinity* vindicated, Page 79. Once more, it is revealed also, that these Three (the Father, Son and Spirit) are distinct among themselves, by certain relative Properties. — So that they are distinct, living, Divine, intelligent, voluntary Principles of Operation or Working, and that in and by eternal Acts one towards another, and in

Acts that outwardly respect the Creation. And Page 81. Our Conclusion from the whole is, that there is nothing more fully expressed in the Scripture than this sacred Truth is, that there is one God, Father, Son and holy Ghost, which are Divine, Distinct, Intelligent, Voluntary, Omnipotent Principles of Operation and Working: Which whosoever thinks himself obliged to believe the Scriptures, must believe. — Nor doth Faith, for its Security, Establishment, and Direction absolutely stand in need of any farther Exposition or Explanation of these Things, or the use of any Terms not consecrated to the present Service by the Holy Ghost.

Another is Dr. Calamy, in his Sermons concerning the Trinity, Page 262. Where having mentioned many of the distinguishing Actions of the Three Divine Persons taught in Scripture, he concludes, These are Things that are so very different, that they very plainly intimate a Distinction in the Agents to whom they are respectively ascribed. For how can they be any other than distinct, if the one does what the other does not.

Another is, Mr. Wischart, Principal of the College of Edinburgh, in his Theologia, Vol. 2. p. 717. As created Persons are Subsistences, singular, intelligent, and incommunicable; so are the Subsistences in the Godhead; and a little before, Subsistence notes a Manner of Existence proper to Substances; a Person must subsist and not exist only. And p. 719. A Person is an intelligent Subsistence.

The last I name is, Dr. Waterland's 2d Defence of Queries, where he explains at large the Meaning of the Word Person, from Page 365 to 369. and defines it thus, Page 366. A single Person is an intelligent Agent, having the distinctive Characters of I, thou, he, and not divided, or distinguished into more intelligent Agents, capable of the same Characters; and shews the Fitness of this Definition, 1st, Negatively, An Army, a Senate, &c. is not a single Person, because divided into more. The Trinity, upon the Catholick Hypothesis, is not a single Person, because distinguished into more intelligent Agents than one. 2dly, Positively, A Man is a single Person by the Definition. An Angel is a single Person by the same. Father, Son or Holy Ghost, a single Person by the same. --- To clear this Matter a little further, we must distinguish Persons into several Kinds, as First, Divided and Undivided, Simple and Compound. And the Dr. tells, That all other Persons are divided, except the Three Divine Persons, who are undivided, not having any separate Existence independent on each other, Page 367. Of whom he also says, They are Persons in the same common Sense of Person, but Persons of a different Kind, and differently circumstantiated, &c. Page 369.

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From the Whole, the Defendant pleads, That what he teaches, relating to this Allegation, is so far from being a Crime, that it is his Duty, and necessary to guard the Students against the *Sabellian* and *Socinian* Heresies.

The Seventh Allegation is, "As also you taught that *Deus Pater est ante Deum Filium, non tempore sed causalitate.*" And added the following Expression, *Ni supponamus Deum non posse creare ab eterno.*

*Ans.* 1. This Allegation has the same Defect often complained of, that it does not mention what the Defendant was teaching, and so renders what was alledged uncertain, especially after Sixteen Months and more are elapsed, since it can be supposed the Thing happened.

2dly. This Article consists of Two Parts, both which, from the Meaning of the Word, seem to relate to what he taught of the Eternal Generation of the Son of God, in Opposition to the *Arians*, who said he was a Creature made out of nothing, and that there was a Time when he was not: All the Branches of which Heresy he refuted at great length; and proved, that the Son of God was neither created nor made, but eternally begotten, so as he had no Beginning of his Duration, more than the Father had. In teaching which, he had Occasion to observe how some of the Ancients expressed themselves on this Subject: Some of whom, even zealous Opposers of the *Arians*, called God the Father *causa Filii*, by which they mean'd only his being his Father, who eternally begat him; according to which Way of speaking, the Father was not *prior Filio tempore, sed causalitate.* Bp. Pearson, in his Book on the Creed, the End of P. 37. and Beginning of 38. cites several Passages of this Nature out of *Athanasius, Hilary, Augustine*, and others, to whom, for the Sake of Brevity and Conveniency, I refer.

And Dr. Waterland's first Defence, Pag. 91. says to his Antagonist, You admit, that the Attributes, specified in the Texts, belong to both (Father and Son:) Only you observe, That all Powers and Attributes are said to be the Father's only, because they belong to him primarily or originally, as the Self-existent Cause. This I can readily admit, as well as you, provided only the Word, Cause, be interpreted to a just, sober and Catholick Sense; (as the Greek Writers especially have understood it) and Self-existent be interpreted, as it should be, negatively.

And *Wallaeus S. T. Pr. at Leyden*, in his *Enchiridion*, Fol. 30. in Answer to that Objection, *Omnis causa est prior suo effectu; Pater est causa Filii & Spiritus Sancti, ergo illis est prior;* says, *Majer est distinguenda. Nam omnis causa est prior suo effectu, si naturam spetes & ordinem, non tamen est semper prior tempore;* where he does not dispute against the Use of the Word *causa*; but uses a Distinction that intirely cuts off the Objection.

Where-

Wherefore, altho' the Defendant had used these Words, as alledged, they would not be relevant to infer any Censure. Yet he is persuaded the Words of the Libel are not his, tho' it is probable, in relating the Expressions of some of the Ancients, he might say, *Pater est prior Filio, non tempore sed causalitate;* but then he would not readily omit the Caution he uses to give the Students, That the Words *causa* or *causalitas*, are of too large a Meaning to be used for expressing *God the Father his begetting his eternal Son*; because in their ordinary Use they are applied to God's creating the World, or to Creatures with respect to any Effect they are the Cause of: And therefore the Defendant used to express himself thus, *Pater est prior Filio, non tempore sed ordine & paternitate.*

2dly, As to the Expression said to be added, *Ni supponamus Deum non posse creare ab eterno*, it being contrary to the Defendant's fix'd Opinion, and the whole Strain of his Discourse on that Subject, he is of Opinion, that if any of the Hearers say that he utter'd it, that Person by not hearing distinctly or otherwise, has mistaken *creare* for *generare*; this last Word *generare* being agreeable both to his Opinion and the Argument he was then handling; wherein he proved the Falshood of supposing that God could not beget his Son from Eternity; whereas the Word *creare* would be altogether impertinent. But if some Hearers shall be express and positive, that he used the Word *creare*, which he is not conscious of, it ought to be construed only a Trip in speaking, which much greater Men than he are liable unto, when discoursing an Hour or two on several Points of Divinity; and considering his great bodily Weakness, and with what Difficulty he taught the former Session of the College, such Escapes of Expression might be more incident to him than usually. To which he adds, That he never heard any Hint of the former Part of this Allegation, till the Precognition was taken, and heard nothing of the latter Expression, till he heard it in the Libel. Wherefore, if any Hearers have talk'd this to other People, without acquainting him thereof, he is humbly of Opinion, that they ought to be looked upon as the *Broachers of the fama clamosa* against him. On the whole the Defendant pleads, That there is nothing of this Article relevant, unless the Part of a Sentence, capable of an ill Construction, when taken separately from the rest of his Discourse, that determined it to a right Meaning, be made a Crime; or the Mistake of some Hearers, or a Trip in his speaking, inconsistent with the rest of his Discourse, be made a Fault. Neither of which he can expect from the Justice of his Reverend Judges.

**T**HE Defendant proceeds in the next Place to answer these Articles of the Libel, that appear to him to be taken out of his foresaid Letter, and Answers given in to the Re-

Reverend Presbytery, tho' it be not plainly said they are taken out of these Papers.

The first Allegation is the second in the Libel, viz. *As also you have owned and acknowledged, that in speaking of our Lord Jesus Christ, you use not the Terms Necessary-existence nor Independence, and gave this pretended Reason for it, that they are not mentioned concerning Christ in the Holy Scriptures or our Confession of Faith, or the System you teach.*

*Ans.* 1. The Defendant having never owned this in teaching, but having done it expressly in his said Papers, he cannot help Thinking this Article is taken out of them; and is humbly of Opinion, that the Omission of these Terms is no Fault, seeing he teaches the whole Doctrine of the *Blessed Trinity*, as revealed in Scripture, so far as he understands it; and the whole of it as taught in our *Confession of Faith*, and in *Pillet's Latin Compend*, Book II. from Chap. 13. to the End; and consequently, all that the Presbytery would have him to teach by the Use of these Terms, so far as he knows their Mind. He also humbly thinks, the Reasons given in his Letter, and more fully insisted on in his said Answers, are sufficient to shew he is at least guilty of no censurable Fault by this Omission.

2dly, it being manifest, that these Terms are not mentioned, either in Holy Scripture, or in the said System, in the Chapters that teach the Doctrine of the *Trinity*, or in our *Confession of Faith and Catechisms*; he is humbly of Opinion, That by this Omission, he has exactly observed the Injunctions of the two Acts of our General Assembly mentioned in the Libel. And, if he had used them, he might perhaps have been accused by some Body or other, for not keeping by the Form of sound Words, or for teaching what is not needful to be taught in Divinity. To which he adds, That this Omission can be no more a Crime in his teaching, than it is in Ministers preaching; and he does not remember, that he ever observed any Minister use these Terms in preaching, tho' he has been capable of noticing what he heard preach'd these forty Years and more.

3dly, If this can be supposed a Fault, he has mended it: For when he found, on the 18th and 19th of January last, that the Reverend Presbytery would not consider, whether his *Answers to their References* had removed their seeming Objections against some Passages of his foresaid Letter, and the Grounds of their Questions to him, but referred them to the conjunct Meeting of the Reverend Committee for Purity of Doctrine with the Presbytery; which occasioned the continuing of the injurious Stories, in his Opinion, groundlessly spread concerning him, tho' he does not suppose it was the Presbytery's Design; of which Stories this of denying Christ to be a Necessary-being gave most Offence; lest by these Means the

Students should be also imposed on, or tempted to doubt of this Truth, tho' he had formerly taught them what he thought sufficient to convince them of it; he took the first Opportunity of telling them his Mind about it.

Accordingly, when he came to teach the 8th Chap. of our Confession, which was a little before or after Candlemas last; having some of the chief Branches of the Arguments in the first, and the Beginning of the second Sections of that Chapter, he prov'd that our Lord Jesus Christ was a Necessary-being, because he was *Very and Eternal God of one Substance, and Equal with the Father, who as he bath Life in himself, so he bath given to the Son to have Life in himself*; that is *he is Infinite, Eternal and Unchangeable in his Being, Wisdom, Power, Holiness, Justice, Goodness, and other Divine Perfections*, which he has manifested in Creating and Governing the World, and are supposed in his being ordained the Glorious Mediator and Saviour of sinful Mankind, and the Great Judge of the World. Which Way of proving this Truth, lies open to the Capacity of every Christian, and fully satisfies him, that the Glorious Son of God, *by and for whom all Things in Heaven and Earth were created, and by the Word of whose Power they are upheld, is infinitely above all created, contingent and precarious Beings whatsoever.*

A Second Allegation that seems taken from the said Papers is *And likewise you have taught or vented that Self-existence, Independence, Supreme Deity, and the Title of the only True God may be taken, and were by some Authors taken in a Sense that includes the personal Property of the Father, and so not belonging to the Son; and tho' you said that Necessary-existence, Independence, Supreme Deity, and the Title of the only True God might belong to the Son, in such Sense as included not the personal Property of the Father; yet you told not what that Sense was, but without doing so, you have inculcated the foresaid Distinction, as a Caution that may be necessary for Students in reading both ancient and modern Authors, whether Friends or Adversaries to the Truth.*

*Ans.* 1. It is not easy to understand what is the Crime objected from this Cluster of Articles, or what Way they were vented; only, so far as the Defendant can guess, they are vented in his foresaid Papers.

2dly, He does not remember that he mentioned the Term *Self-existent*, in teaching the Doctrine of the Trinity, except once in November One thousand seven hundred and twenty five, in that Remark, that *being of None* was the same that many Authors understood by the Word *Self-existent* taken in the negative Sense, as he says in his foresaid Letter: And pleads that his telling this Fact is no Crime.

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3dly, He remembers nothing more that he has said concerning the Terms *Necessary-existence* and *Independency* in teaching, than what he has told in his foreaid Letter and Answers, and in his Answer to the preceeding Article of the Libel.

4thly, As to Supreme Deity, he supposes this Phrase is put for *summus Deus*, the Abstract for the Concrete; which, all grant, does much alter the Sense. And as to the Titles, *summus Deus*, and *the only true God*, he hopes it will appear, from his said Letter and Answers, that it is no Fault to tell this uncontroverted Fact, that some Authors, even zealous and able Defenders of the Doctrine of the *Blessed Trinity*, both ancient and modern, have used them in a Sense that includes the Father's personal Property, and therefore have ascribed them to the Father only in that Sense by way of Eminence as some speak, or emphatically as others say. What Texts of Scripture, or Article of our Confession of Faith, or Catechisms, is by any or all of these Particulars impugn'd, or deny'd, or rendred doubtful, the Defendant owns himself so weak as not to perceive; and therefore, if the Presbytery shall find any of them relevant, he craves that they may point out to him such Passages of Scripture, &c. and allow him Time to consider them, that if convinced of a Fault or Mistake, he may correct it.

5thly, 'Tis alledged he said these Terms may be taken in the foresaid Sense, which he is persuaded he never said in teaching; and he denies it twice in his foresaid Answers, viz. on *Quest.* 3d. and *Quest. 4th.* Only in his said Answers, two or three Lines before the First Head of Recapitulation, Page 193. he says of these Terms, "They either actually have been, or may be meant by some Authors, whether the Words be used right or wrong;" the evident Sense of which is, may possibly in fact be meant, but not tightly as the Words of the Libel seem to import. Wherefore he supposes this Clause has been inserted into the Libel by Mistake.

6thly, He hopes it is not charged as a Fault, that he says,  
" When any, or all of these Terms are taken in a Sense inclu-  
" ding the Father's personal Property (whether by a right or  
" wrong Use of these Words) they cannot in that Sense be truly  
" affirmed of the Person of the Son or Holy Ghost; " which is  
what he says in his said Papers: And he thinks his Meaning is  
not well represented in the Libel, by these general and ambi-  
guous Words, *And so not belonging to the Son.*

7thly, The Libel alleges he said these Terms "Might be long to the Son, in such a Sense as included not the personal Property of the Father." This he also thinks is inferred by Mistake, because he says expressly in the said Letter, in Answer to the Report about *Summus Deus*, "Then they would truly agree to him (the Son); and in Answer to that Report *Christus non est ens necessarium*. they (to wit, the Terms *ens necessarium*)

"*G independens*) would no doubt agree to him, (the Son)" which he repeats in his foresaid Answers.

8thly, 'Tis alledged, *He told not what that Sense was.* This he takes to be another Mistake in Fact; because in his said Letter, in Answer to the First Report, he says expressly, *But if (the Words Summus Deus) be meant of Christ's being the Creator and Sovereign Governour of the World, or of the essential Perfections that are common to the Father and the Son, then they mould truly agree to him; and told them (the Students) that Pietet manifestly took them in this Sense; according to which, all his Arguments were conclusive, which I shewed in the particular Explication of them.* This plainly determines the Sense in which the Words *Summus Deus* (which occured to the Defendant in teaching) will truly agree to the Son; and may also determine the Sense in which the other Terms or Titles do no doubt agree to him; Which the Defendant, in his then great Affliction and Weakness, thought needful to repeat in a Letter to his Reverend Brethren, who by Parity of Reason could apply this to the other Terms. He thought it also needless to repeat it in his foresaid Answers, judging it sufficient therein to show the Reverend Presbytery that their Conclusions followed as plainly and justly from the Doctrines mentioned in his Letter, as from the Passages of our Confession of Faith and Catechism, from which the Presbytery in their References inferr'd them. Besides, he did not think himself obliged to give a particular Sense of some Terms that he made no Use of in Teaching, they not occurring in Holy Scripture, or our Confession, or in that Part of the System he taught on the Doctrine of the Trinity. But finding that his Reverend Brethren did not take such Notice of the Sense given in the foresaid Passage of his Letter, as to apply it to the other Terms; that he might undeceive them in this Point, he did, in his Representation given in to them the 29th of March last, apply the same Sense to the other Terms mentioned, namely, when they are taken to signify *Essential Perfections* that are common to all the Divine Persons; So he hopes this Mistake is fully removed by what is said in this and the other Papers: Whence it will also appear, that his observing to the Students the different Senses wherein these Terms are taken, even by zealous Friends of the Truth, is an useful Caution to them; tho' he did not inculcate it upon them, unless his mentioning it in his three foresaid Papers be called so.

From the Whole, the Defendant pleads, that there is nothing relevant in any, or all the Branches of this Article that is agreeable to what is Fact.

A Third Allegation is, *And further you use to affirm, after insisting on the foresaid Distinction with Respect to the Self-existence of the Son, that you would take it as a Piece of useful*

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*Caution or Instruction, both to you and the Students, if the Presbytery of Glasgow would declarre the true Meaning of that English Term of Art, as you thought fit to call it, when it is to be affirmed of the Person of the Son; and you said the same of the Holy Ghost.*

*Ans. 1st.* The Defendant humbly thinks these Words of the Libel, *You used to affirm, after insisting on the foresaid Distinction with Respect to the Self-existence of the Son, have crept into the Libel by Mistake.* For to his Remembrance, he never but once mentioned in teaching, That being of *None* was the same that many Authors understood by the Word *Self-existent*, as said above. And he only once said, he would take it as a Piece of useful Caution or Instruction, both to himself and the Students, if the Presbytery of *Glasgow* would declare the true Meaning of that *English Term of Art*, when it is to be affirmed of the Person of the Son, or of the Holy Ghost; namely, in his foresaid Answers on Q. 3d. So that he neither used to affirm, nor insist on the foresaid Distinction, as the Libel says he did. And he also humbly thinks it is no Fault, that he desired the Presbytery of *Glasgow* to instruct him in the true Meaning of that Term, when to be applied as aforesaid; but was on the contrary a Piece of dutiful Respect to his Reverend Brethren, and Regard to the Truth, that he might learn from them any useful Caution and Instruction to himself and his Students: Which he had Reason to hope they would chearfully grant, by explaining to him their own Sense of a Term which they would have him to make Use of; while they seem to charge it on him as a Fault, that he does not determine the Sense of other Peoples Terms, which he does not make Use of in teaching.

*2dly,* His calling the Word *Self-existent* an *English Term of Art*, seems to be charged as a Crime; which he humbly conceives is not relevant, altho' he had been mistaken in calling it so. Yet so far as he has had Occasion to observe the Use of this Word in *English* Writers, it appears to him to be an *English Term of Art*, and, as it seems, lately invented, he having never, to his Remembrance, read it in any Book printed above 40 Years since, tho' perhaps others may have read it in older Books. He likewise finds it taken negatively, for being of *None*, by the most zealous Friends and able Defenders of the *Blessed Trinity*, who understood exactly the *English Language*.

Such as the learned and honourable Author of the critical History of the Creed, *Page 64.* " This Expression of one " *God*,—denotes our Faith, That there is but one *Eternal, Independent, Self-existent God.*" Which is understood of God the Father, as is plain from his Words in the preceeding *Page*, and what follows in this.

And Mr. *Nelson's* anonymous Friend against Dr. *Clark, Page 64.* " Again it is supposed that the Term *is* signifies the " *Self-existent Being:* If the Meaning be, that *Self-existence* " *is*

" is an essential Part of the Idea of *Being*, the Person affirming it, is obliged to prove it; since others are of Opinion, and with good Reason, that it rather relates to the Manner of existing of the first Person in the Divine Being, than to the Nature and Essence of the Being it self.— If thoroughly considered, it is a positive Term, for a negative Idea, and imports no more than that the Person or Subject, of which it is affirmed, derives not its Existence from another Person; so that the Son, in respect of his Divine Nature, may receive the Names as expressing him as *Being*; and yet they, who give them him, not incur the Blame of falling into *Sabellianism*, or making him *Self-existent*."

And the Author of some Considerations against Dr. Clark, Page 11, 12. cited in Dr. Clark's Answers, Page 226—229. " There may be Emanations necessary, tho' not indeed *Self-existent*, from the one *Self-existent Being*.— Whatever is in any Manner derived from the *Self-existent Being*,— must be *necessary*. — The Nature of that *Being*, who is *Self-existent*, may be communicated, tho' the Character of *Self-existence* cannot: Which is no more than to say, the *Nature* of the Father may be communicated, tho' the *paternal Character and Relation* cannot. — *Self-existence* is not properly the *Nature* of God, nor a *primary Attribute* of his *Essence*, but only a *Mode of Subsistence*."

Dr. Calamy's Sermons on the Trinity, Page 250. " The *Marcionites* and the *Manichees* after them held two *Self-existent Principles*."

Dr. Waterland's first Defence of Queries, Page 121. " Here are several Mistakes. 1st, The Idea of *simple Eternity* is not the same with that of *Necessary-existence*; Nor 2. Is it the same both with *Necessary-existence* and *Self-existence*, supposing it were the same with the former. Page 122. The Ideas of *Necessary-existence* and *Self-existence* — are not the same Ideas. Aristotle and Plato supposed the World, &c.— to be *necessary*, but not *Self-existent*. Something like this has been constantly believed by the Christian Church, in respect of the  $\lambda\omega\gamma\Theta$ . And Page 223. You argue, if the Son be *Eternal*, he is *Necessarily-existing*, which I allow: And if *Necessarily-existing*, then *Self-existent*, which I deny: And you cannot prove. Margin of that same Page, the Dr. cites from Alexander Bishop of Alexandria. Neither *Was*, nor *Always*, nor *Before the Ages or Worlds*, is the same with *Unbegotten*. This (says Dr. Waterland) was said in Opposition to the *Arians*, who were willing to confound the Idea of *Eternity*, and of *Necessary-existence*, with *Self-existence*. And Page 124. Foot Margin, He calls it Dr. Clark's *Leading Fallacy*, that the Son cannot be strictly and essentially God, unless he be *Self-existent* and *Unoriginate* in every Sense.

" Page

Page 137, 138. In explaining these Words of Novation, *Hic ergo cum sit genitus a Patre, semper est in Patre; semper autem sic dico, ut non innatum sed natum probem*, says, There might be some then, as well as now, who knew not how to distinguish between Eternity and Self-existence. The *Sabellians*, in particular, might pretend that the Son being Eternal, must be the Self-existent Father himself. Page 371. I never pretend that Self-existence is an essential Character of God. You might have considered, that we deny it absolutely; we suppose it negative and relative; and call it a personal Character. And downwards, he calls Self-existence an equivocal Word. 2d Defence, Page 48, 49. The *Arians* pretended — That the Son must be either unbegotten or a Creature: And he cites a Passage of *Alexander Bishop of Alexandria*, who says, *That betwixt these Two comes in the intermediate only begotten Nature of God the Word, by whom the Father made all Things out of nothing*, to which the Dr. assents, understanding by *Nature, Person*. And blames his Antagonists for borrowing their main Principle from the *Arians* — That God the Son cannot be God in the proper Sense, unless he be Unoriginate and Self-existent as the unbegotten Father himself; there being, as you conceive, no medium between Self-existence, in the highest Sense, and precarious Existence, that is, in plain Words, — between being unbegotten and being a Creature."

**A**ND now in the *Last Place*, The Defendant does offer the following Grounds of Exculpation, against the whole Charge contained in the Libel, and of which he craves he may be allowed a Proof, *viz.* That in Regard the Libel is founded, in a great Measure, upon the Emission of Words alledged to have been uttered, at a great Distance of Time, without condescending upon the particular Occasion, Subject, or full Connection of the Discourse upon which they were so emitted; and, that the particular Expressions, and the Connection of them, may easily have escaped the Memory of the Witnesses: That therefore he may be allowed a conjunct Proof, or a preferable Proof, for Exculpation, upon every Allegation contained in the Libel, which relates to his Expressions uttered in Teaching or Speaking; that thereby the whole Strain and Import of such Expressions may fully appear; which is the only Rule by which the Defendant's Sentiments can be measured or judged. And when that is allowed him, he offers to prove, That any Expressions contained in the Libel, that were deliberately uttered by him, which, separately taken, might appear unsafe or impertinent, will, when the whole Strain of his Discourse at the Time is considered, appear safe, blameless, and agree-

agreeable to the Holy Scriptures, our Confession of Faith and Catechisms.

2dly, In regard the Libel does not alledge, That the Defendant did habitually, or at several Times, utter such Expressions in Speaking or Teaching, so that an Expression might possibly have fallen inadvertently from him in the Course of Speaking or Teaching ; especially considering his late (at that Time) great Weakness and bodily Indisposition : That therefore, in order to redargue, that any such Expressions, if perchance uttered, were the Defendant's settled and deliberate Sentiments, he may be allowed to prove, That he usually, in his Teaching, explains the Doctrine of the *Blessed Trinity* in such Terms, as are strictly agreeable to the Holy Scriptures ; namely, in the express Words of our *Confession* and *Catechisms* : which, it is hoped, will sufficiently show, that no Regard ought to be had to any such Expression, as is capable of an ill Meaning, that might have escaped him ; which human Frailty, in a Course of Speaking or Teaching upon nice and important Points, cannot avoid.

Upon the whole Matter, seeing that the Libel, as given out to the Defendant to answer, does not mention any definite Place where the Expressions charged in the Libel were uttered ; That it does not lay the Charge within the Compass of one certain Year, as is done in all Criminal Libels, and ought much more to be so done in a Libel for the *Emission of Words* ; That it is not alledged, that the Defendant did habitually, or at several Times in Teaching or Speaking, utter the Expressions libelled ; That the Libel includes a great Space of Time, in which there was no *fama clamosa*, or a particular Accuser for the Expressions said to be uttered within that Time, contrary to the Ru'es of the Church in the Form of Process ; That the Libel does not express the particular Texts of Scripture, or the Parts in our *Confession* and *Catechisms*, to which the Expressions contained in the Libel are repugnant, as was appointed and observed in Mr. Webster's *Case* ; That the Defendant has fully shown in his Answers, that some Part of the Charge is neither repugnant to the Holy Scriptures, nor the Doctrine of this Church, nor tends to undermine or shake the Belief of the same ; That he owns, that other Parts of the Charge are not his Sentiments, but if perhaps the Words were uttered, that it might be an Escape of the Witnesses in Hearing, or of him in Speaking ; That he offers to prove in his Exculpation, that such of the Words in the Charge, as were deliberately uttered by him, will appear blameless, when the whole Strain and Connection of his Discourse at the Time is considered ; That he also offers to prove in his Exculpation, that he usually in Teaching, explains the Doctrine of the *Blessed Trinity*, in such Terms as are agreeable to the Holy Scriptures, namely, in the express Words

Words of our *Confession* and *Catechisms*: It is therefore humbly hoped, that the Reverend Presbytery will find, That the Libel is altogether irrelevant, or that it is elided by the above Defences and Answers; or that the Grounds of Exculpation offered are relevant to exculpate him from the Charge laid against him.

At least, in case the Presbytery shall find, That there yet remains any Relevancy, in any of the Articles of the Libel, that they will point out the *special Articles*, which they judge to be relevant, with their *special Reasons*, and the particular Passages of Holy Scriptures, Confession and Catechisms, which such Articles do *impugn, deny, undermine, or shake the Belief of*; or the particular *Opinions* and *Expressions* contained in the Libel, which are used by *Adversaries in an unsound Sense, or Hypotheses that tend more to Strife than Edification*; that so the Defendant, from a Conviction of his Error (if any be) may correct it. And in all Events the Defendant pleads, That it may be reserved intire to him to be heard against the Proof, if any be thought needful; and that he may be allowed to explain such Expressions as may cast up upon the roof, or may be excepted against in his foresaid Defences. ACCORDING TO JUSTICE, and the known Methods observed in all Libels, when any Person is accused for the *Emission of Words*.

Particular Grounds of Exculpation offered by  
Mr. JOHN SIMSON, against the Libel exhibited against him, now lying before the Reverend Presbytery of Glasgow, which he offers to prove by Witnesses adduced for proving the Libel.

**F**irst, That the Defendant did usually, and within the Time contained in the Libel, teach as his own Judgment, and recommend as *Gospel Truth*, the express Words of the Articles of the *Confession of Faith*, opposed to the Articles charged in the Libel, viz. He taught, that our *Blessed Lord Jesus Christ the Son of God*, the second Person of the most glorious and adorable *Trinity*, is very and eternal God, of one Substance and equal with the Father, and that in the Unity of the Godhead there be Three Persons, of one Substance, Power and Eternity, *God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost*; the Father being of None, neither begotten nor proceeding; the Son

eternally begotten of the Father, and the Holy Ghost eternally proceeding from the Father and the Son: Which Three Persons are one true Eternal God, the same in Substance, equal in Power and Glory, altho' distinguished by their personal Properties aforesaid.

2dly, That in Teaching the Equality of the Son with the Father, he shewed, That he had Life in himself as the Father had, that is, that he was infinite, eternal and unchangeable, in his Being, Wisdom, Power, Holiness, Justice, Goodness, and other Divine Perfections; and confirmed the Truth of all these essential Divine Perfections that are mentioned by Professor Pidet, in his Second Book, from Chap. 13. to the End of that Book, where he treats of the Doctrine of the Holy Trinity, which is the System the Defendant teaches on that Subject: And he refers it to the Witnesses, whether they ever heard him deny or impugn any of the Articles above-mentioned. And such an Exculpation having been admitted as relevant to elide the Libel in Mr. Webster's Case, both by the Committee for Purity of Doctrine, and by the General Assembly 1717, and allowed preferable Probation; the Defendant hopes, from the Justice of the Reverend Presbytery, that they will admit it as relevant to elide the Libel, and allow it preferable Probation in this Case.

3dly, But, *ex superabundante*, the Defender adds, That he offers to prove by the said Witnesses, that within the Time mentioned in the said Libel, he did refute the several Branches of the Arian Heresy; namely, That the Son of God is created or made out of nothing, that there was a Time when he was not, that he was a changeable and precarious Being, and the like. In Opposition to which the Defendant taught, That the glorious Son of God was neither created nor made, but was the only begotten Son of God, eternally begotten of him, without any Beginning of his Duration, of one Substance with the Father, endued with the same essential infinite Perfections with him, which he has manifested by his creating all Things in Heaven and Earth, visible and invisible, &c. and upholding all Things by the Word of his Power, which declares him to be by Nature infinitely above all created, precarious and contingent Beings whatsoever, as is God the Father, with whom the Son and Holy Ghost are one God, tho' distinct Persons from him, being distinguished by their personal Properties aforesaid.

And seeing the Defendant usually teaches the above mentioned Truths, as his fix'd Opinion, any Expression that might be uttered by him, inconsistent with them, he disclaims; and pleads that any such Expression ought to be construed, either as an Escape in Hearing or Speaking; especially seeing it is not alledged in the Libel, That he uttered the Expressions therein charged oftner than once.

JO. SIMSON.

The

## The Depositions of the Witnesses.

Glasgow, April 19th, 1727.

I. Wit. **M**R. JAMES SLOSS Preacher of the Gospel, residing in Glasgow, aged 28 Years, unmarried, &c. Depones, That during the Time libelled, he was present at Professor Simson's Lessons one Day, which, as he remembers, was in some of the Months of October, November, or December 1725; and also, That he attended his Lessons for some Years before that Time, but with the Interruption of three Years betwixt and that said Day: And Depones, That he heard the Professor that said Day teaching upon the Doctrine of the Eternity of the Son of God; and, that he heard him then use or advance Propositions on that Subject, different from, and contrary to what he formerly heard him advance when teaching on that Subject (as the Deponent thought:) Depones, That to the best of his Remembrance, he heard the Professor advance the following Propositions, viz. *Pater, or Deus Pater fuit ante Filium, or Deum Filium, non tempore sed causalitate:* Then the Professor added (whether immediately or not, the Deponent cannot be positive, or whether there was a Sentence or Two interveined) these Words, *Ni supponamus Deum non posse creare ab eterno:* Depones, That in the former Years, when the Deponent heard the Professor teach, the said Professor gave the following Caution, viz. That the Term Person, when applied to the Blessed Trinity in the Godhead, was not to be taken precisely in the same Sense as when spoken of Creature; and, that he does not remember, that the Professor gave, or had Occasion to give that Caution when he heard him last. *De ceteris ignorantia scientia patet:* And this is the Truth, as he shall answer to God.

Being interrogate, at the Professor's Desire, If he heard him the said Day above deponed on, teach, That *Christus, aut Filius Dei fuit genitus ab eterno?* Depones, That the Professor then expressed a great many Orthodox Propositions, and a great many that the Deponent thought not so; and as to the particular Proposition in the Question, the Deponent cannot declare upon Oath, That he heard the *ipissima verba* of it: Depones, That he can remember none of the Terms the Professor used a-  
gent that Proposition. Being interrogate, If the Professor that Day used the following Argument for proving the eternal Generation of the Son, viz. *Si supponatur Deum Patrem non posse*

*tuisse generare Filium ab eterno, sequeretur Patrem aliquamdiu debuisse existere, ut capax redderetur generandi Filium; quod evidenter absurdum est?* Depones, That he does not remember the same. And this is also the Truth as he shall answer to God. Being further interrogate for the Professor, If the Professor uttered the above Propositions deponed on, viz. *Pater or Deus Pater fuit ante Filium, &c.* and *Ni supponamus, &c.* as his own Opinion or the Opinion of others? Depones, That he took it to be delivered as the Professor's own Opinion. And this is also the Truth, *ut supra.*

Ja. SLOSS.

Ja. ROBE Moderator.

April 20, 1727.

II. Wit, M<sup>r</sup>. JAMES RITCHIE Probationer, residing in the Parish of Campsie, aged 25 Years, &c. Depones, That he heard Professor Simson several Times teach in the Divinity Hall of the College of Glasgow in the Month of December 1725, and some Times in January, February and March 1726. and also heard him teach several Sessions preceding that Time; and that he was not teaching upon the Subject of the Trinity directly, to the Deponent's hearing, when he explained the Chapter of the Confession of Faith, wherein it is contained, or the Chapters of the System or Systems he taught that Year on that Point, and that any Thing he heard of that Subject, were only Hints of the same, which occasionally were given on other Points of Divinity, and that the Doctrines which he heard in these Hints were not different (as he thought) from what he had heard the Professor teach in former Years; but whether the Arguments he had made use of in some of these Hints were the same that he made use of formerly, the Deponent cannot be positive: Depones, That in the Years he attended, preceding the Time libelled, the Professor gave the following Caution, viz. *That the Term Person, when applied to the Blessed Three in the Godhead, was not to be taken precisely in the same Sense as when spoken of Creatures;* but did not hear him give that Caution in the Year 1725, the Professor not being on that Subject when the Dponent attended: Depones, That he heard an Argument made use of by one of the Students, and proposed to the Professor, whereof the Conclusion was, *Then the Son is Dependent;* to which the Professor answered, *That the Terms Dependent and Independent could not be properly applied to the Relations of the Divine Persons.*

Being Interrogate for the Professor, Whether or not he heard the Professor teach as his Opinion, that the Son of God the second Person of the Trinity, was very and eternal God, of one Substance, and equal with the Father: Depones, That he heard the Professor assert, *That the three Divine Persons were of one Substance, Power and Eternity,* and that he had that Expression

pression, They are equal in Power and Glory ; that is, Infinite, Eternal, Unchangeable in their Being, Wisdom, Power, Holiness, Justice, Goodness, and other Divine Perfections, and that he added from that Text in the Second Psal. *I will declare the Decree, thou art my Son this Day I have begotten thee* ; This Text proves, that the Son is as ancient as the Decree, that is, Eternal. And Depones, That the above Expressions were uttered in December 1725, or some of the Months of January, February or March 1726, when the Professor was teaching on the Eight Chapter of the Confession of Faith. Being interrogate, if he heard the Professor assert, That all the Divine Perfections belonged to the three Persons of the God-head ? Depones, That he heard the Professor assert, when explaining the foresaid Chapter of our Confession of Faith, *That there was nothing affirmed of the Father, but what ought to be, or should be affirmed of the Son, except the Father's Personal Property, which is incomunicable.* Being interrogate, if or not he heard the Professor use this Argument, That from created Persons having each a different Substance, we could not infer or conclude that each Divine Person behoved to have a different Substance, because the Substance of created Persons was finite, and the Divine Substance was immense ? Depones, That he has heard him use that Argument. *Causa scientiae patet. De ceteris ignorat.* And this is the Truth as he shall answer to God.

J. RITCHIE.  
J. ROBE Moderator.

III. Wit. M R. EDWARD BOYD Student of Divinity  
 in the University of Glasgow, aged 22 Years,  
 Depones That he has attended Professor Simson's Lessons in  
 the Divinity-hall of the College of Glasgow, since October 1725,  
 and a Session or two before that Time : Depones, That he  
 thinks the Professor altered his Method of Teaching upon the  
 Subject of the Blessed Trinity, since October 1725, from what he  
 used in the Years preceeding : Depones, That the Professor  
 being the Time libelled teaching the Chap. de creatione in Mar-  
 kii medulla Theologiae Christianae, that the Sentence, *Non tamen  
 hic potuit ab eterno creari, quia ens eternum est necessarium & in-  
 dependens*, the Professor shewed himself dissatisfied with the  
 Argument ; and added or said, *Christus est eternus, sed non ens  
 necessarium, or non necessario existit, or non necessarius est.* Does  
 not mind which of the Expressions, but is positive the Profes-  
 sor used one of them : And Depones, That the said Argument  
 of Mark is against the eternity of the World, and that he does  
 not remember the Words the Professor shewed his Dissatis-  
 faction with the said Argument by : Depones, That when the  
 Professor was teaching on the Chap. in Mark, de Trinitate, Parag.  
 §. on these Words, viz. *Eas personas convenire, tum in una essen-  
 tia.*

*tia quam per homousion expesserunt Niceni*, he heard the Professor say, That we were not to understand by *Homousion*, either a Numerical or Specifical Essence ; for if Numerical, then it would be *Sabellianism*, and if Specifical, then it would make *Three Gods*; but that it was *talis essentia quæ admittit tres personas & unum Deum*. But whether the Professor gave that Remark on the *Homousion*, as his own Judgment, or of the *Nicene Fathers*, he does not remember ; but thinks that the Professor expressed the said Words, That it was *talis essentia quæ admittit, &c.* as his own Opinion ; and the Deponent does not remember, that the Professor gave any Name to, or attempted to give any Notion of that Sameness or Oneness. Depones, That he heard the Professor assert, That the Three Persons were all indeed one GOD, and had all the same Infinite Divine Perfections ; but does not remember to have heard the Professor add, That whether the Subject of these Perfections was different was a Metaphysical Question we need not determine.

Being interrogate for the Professor ; Depones, That the Time libelled, he heard him teach upon the second Chap. of the *Confession of Faith* the Doctrines therein, in the Words of the said *Confession*, and he heard him teach them as his own Judgment, so far as he remembers : Depones, That he heard the Professor upon the 2d Parag. of the 8th Chap. of the said *Confession*, and heard him explain the said Paragraph 1 Depones, He does not remember his Explication, but was pretty well satisfied with it at the Time : And Depones further, That the Professor passed by the Words *One Substance*, without saying one Word on it, so as he remembers. Being further interrogate, If upon *Mark's Argument*, mentioned in the former Part of this Deposition, he heard the Professor say, That that Argument was not good against *Aristotle* and other Philosophers ; Depones, That he did not mention *Aristotle* or any other Philosopher to his Remembrance, in the last Session of the College ; but this Session he did quarrel the same Argument as insufficient against *Aristotle* : And Depones, That he did not give the same Reason for it this Year as he did in the former, to the Deponent's Remembrance. *Causa scientiae patet. De ceteris ignorat.* And this is the Truth, &c.

EDW. BOYD.

J. ROBE Moderator.

IV. Wit. **M**R. ALEXANDER DUNCAN, Student of Divinity in the University of Glasgow, aged 23 Years, &c. Depones, That he attended the Professor's Lessons in the College of Glasgow for ordinary, from about the End of November 1724, till near the End of that Session ; That he has attended only about Three Afternoons this Session : And Depones, That he

he attended the saids Lessons for Three Sessions preceeding the said Session, which began in October in the said Year 1725: And Depones, That he was not present when the Professor taught some Chapters in *Pillet*; But from what he remembers the Professor taught on that Subject, he thinks he did alter his teaching upon the Subject of the Trinity, from what he had done in former Years, preceeding the said Month of November 1725: Depones, That in the saids former Years, the Professor, when explaining the Term *Person*, in Relation to the foresaid Subject, gave the following Caution, viz. *Persona non sic sumitur eodem sensu, ac quando applicatur hominibus, sed sensu analogico.* But in the latter End of the Year 1725, he gave no such Caution, nor since to his Remembrance: Depones, About the End of the said Year 1725, or in some or other of the Months, toward the Beginning of the Year 1726, a Student propounded a Difficulty, which he thought arose from something the Professor had taught; and in urging the same, the Deponent remembers the Question concerning Christ's *Necessary-existence* came to be handled; but does not remember the Way in which it was proposed, viz. Whether directly, or by Inference: Depones, (as he thinks) The Professor said in Answer to this, *We do not know*; Or, *That it was a Thing we know nothing about*; Or other Words which the Deponent is certain did bear no other *necessary Meaning*. Depones, That the Professor when speaking to the foresaid Student, did say some Term or Terms which the Student used on this Occasion were impertinent; but dares not condescend on any Thing more particular with Respect to the Terms used. Depones, That the Professor, the Time libelled, when he had read in Professor *Mark's* Compend, the *Chap. de creatione*, and the First Argument used by the said Author for proving the World could not have existed from Eternity, viz. *Ens eternum est necessarium*, found Fault with the same; and to make good what he had asserted in the Challenge, asserted, according to the best of the Deponent's Remembrance, *Christus est eternus, non tamen necessarius*; but is not positive these are the exact Words the Professor uttered, and this was uttered the Session of the College preceeding this present Session.

Being interrogate for the Professor: Depones, That he heard him teach upon the second Paragraph of the 8th Chapter of the *Confession of Faith*, *That the Son of God, the Second Person of the Trinity, is Very and Eternal God, of one Substance, and equal with the Father*; and taught it with Satisfaction, as the Deponent thought. *Causa scientie patet. De ceteris ignorat.* And this is the Truth, &c.

ALEX. DUNCAN.  
JA. ROBB Moderator.

Mr.

V. Wit. MR. WILLIAM DENNISTON, Student of Divinity in the University of Glasgow, aged 25 Years, &c. Depones, That he has attended Professor Simson's Lessons in the College of Glasgow, sometime since October 1725, and attended the said Lessons Five Sessions of Teaching preceding that Time: Depones, That there was one Particular wherein he thought the Professor altered his Way of teaching, since the said Month of October, from what he had observed him do formerly, anent the Doctrine of the Trinity: Depones, That in the Years preceding the said Session, which began in October 1725, the Professor used to give the following Caution, viz. *That the Term Person, when applied to the Blessed Three in the Godhead, was not to be taken precisely in the same Sense as when spoken of Creatures:* Depones, That last Year he was not present when the Professor taught in his ordinary Course on the Doctrine of the Trinity, and so knows not whether he then gave it or not; and, that he was present this Session, but does not remember whether the Professor gave the said Caution, when teaching on that Subject or not; and remembers not that ever he heard him give that Caution since the said Month of October 1725: Depones, That he heard the Professor this Session give it as his own Opinion, that the Three Persons in the Trinity are not to be said to be either numerically or specifically One in Essence; and, that he heard the Professor say, That it was such an Oneness as included Three Persons, and excluded Three Gods; and, that he heard him give no Name to, or attempted to give no other Notion of that Oneness, besides what the Deponent has above-mentioned: And depones, That the Professor uttered the above Propositions in Latin. *Causa scientiae patet. De ceteris ignorat.* And this is the Truth, &c.

WILLIAM BROWN.  
JA. ROBE Modr.

April 21. 1727.

VI. Wit. MR. WILLIAM BROWN, Student of Divinity in the University of Glasgow, aged 24 Years, &c. depones, That he has attended Professor Simson's Lessons in the College of Glasgow, sometimes since the latter End of December 1725, but has not attended this Session; but that he attended several Sessions preceding the Time libelled: Depones, That the Month of December 1725, or thereby, there being an Objection made by a Student to the Professor, when the Professor was prelecting on that Chapter of the Confession of Faith about Religious Worship, to the best of the Deponent's Remembrance; upon which the Professor was speaking of the Son's deriving his Perfections (as the Deponent remembers) from the Father; whereupon the Objector said to the Professor,

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fessor, That he was a little diffuculted as to what the Professor was saying. The Professor replied, Where is your Difficulty? To which the Objector answered, to the best of the Deponent's Remembrance, That that Way of Speaking seemed to derogate from the Son's *Independency*. To which the Professor replied, That if *Independency*, or the Word *Independent*, (the Deponent minds not which, but is positive it was one of them) be taken in such a Sense as to include the *personal Property* of the Father, it could not be applied to the Son. The Objector insisted, That if the Son was not *Independent* in the same sense in which the Father was, he could not see that he could be *Necessarily-existent*. To which the Professor replied, These Terms are *impertinent*, and not at all to be used in speaking of the *Trinity*; or *Words to that Purpose*. The Objector added, And if the Son be not *Necessarily-existent*, it is possible he might never have had a *Being*. To which the Professor said, We know not these Things; or, we know not whether he might have had a *Being* or not; but is not positive which of these it was, but, to the best of his Remembrance, it was one of them: Depones, That the Time libelled, and Place to which the Libel by the Interlocutor is restricted, he being in Conversation with the Professor, upon the Head of the *Trinity*, he heard the Professor say, That in the *Trinity* there were Three *intelligent Agents* or *Agencies*: Which the Professor further explaining, the Deponent replied, That, according to what the Professor had said, there must likewise be Three *Beings*: To which, as the Deponent best remembers, the Professor said, *No doubt of that*, or, *Certainly there must*, or *Words to that Purpose*: Depones, That this Conversation was in the Professor's own Room in the College, and that the Deponent's Brother, Mr. *David Brown*, was present the whole Time, and Mr. *Lewis Chapman* came in the Time of the Conversation; and, that the same was about the latter End of March 1726. as he best remembers. *Causa scientia patet.*  
*De ceteris ignorat.* And this is the Truth, &c.

WILL. BROWN.

WILL. DOVE Mldr. p. t.

VII. Wit. **M**R. JAMES BAIN, Student of Divinity, aged 18 Years, Depotes, That he has attended Professor Simson's Lessons in the College of Glasgow, frequently since some Time in November 1725, but never before that Session: Depones, That the Time libelled he thinks, to the best of his Remembrance, he has heard the Professor say, *That in the Trinity there are Three intelligent Beings.* Being interrogate for the Professor, What Time it was he heard these Expressions? Depones, That he cannot be positive

as to the precise Time, but that it was sometime in the Session, beginning in October 1725, *Causa scientiae patet, &c.*

JAMES BAIN.

WILL. LOVE Moder. p. t.

VIII. Wit. MR. DOUGAL ALLAN, Student of Divinity, aged 23 Years, Depones, That he attended Professor Simson's Lessons in the College of Glasgow, the last Week of February, and the whole Month of March 1726, and since the latter End of December last, and never heard him on the Subject of the Trinity, except on the Eighth Chap. of the *Confession of Faith*; and so ignorant on the whole Libel.

Being interrogate for the Defender, Professor Simson, Depones, That this Session he heard him teach on the 8th Chap. of the *Confession of Faith*, and heard him teach the Doctrine contained in that Chapter; and heard him say nothing to make the Deponent doubt that it was the Professor's own Opinion. *Causa scientiae patet, &c.*

DOUGAL ALLAN.

WILL. LOVE Moder. p. t.

IX. Wit. MR. WILLIAM BOYD, Student of Divinity, aged 22 Years, Depones, That he attended Professor's Simson's Lessons in the College of Glasgow frequently since about the Middle of December 1725, and three Sessions preceding that Time: Depones, That in the said former Years he heard the Professor give the following Caution, *That the Term Person was not to be understood in the same Sense precisely when applied to the Blessed Trinity, as when applied to Creatures*: Did not hear him give it since the said Month of December 1725, not being present when the Professor was teaching on the Subject of the Trinity: Depones, That the Professor (as the Deponent remembers) in explaining that Chap. of the *Confession of Faith*. concerning Religious Worship and the Sabbath Day, seemed to say something, which a certain Student thought inconsistent with the Son's Independency and Necessary-existence, who accordingly proposed to him this Difficulty or Question, Whether or not that seemed to derogate from the Son's Independency? The Professor answered, Just as you understand the Word Independent; and so he distinguished the Meaning of it, just as in the Professor's Letter and Answers to the Presbytery's References, which Letter and Answers the Deponent has seen and read: Depones, That the Professor said, That the Words *Dependent* and *Independent* were very *improper* and *ambiguous*, because ordinarily spoken of *Creatures*, and so not fit to be used with Respect to the Persons of the Trinity, or to express their personal Relations by. The Student replied, In whatever Sense

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we took it, if he were not *Independent*, he could not be *Necessarily-existent*. To the best of the Deponent's Remembrance, the Professor began his Answer with these Words, *Now how do you know that?* (but is not positive) However, in Regard that these Words were only introductory to some other Things that followed in the *Answer*, the Deponent cannot say that these Words (thus standing separate from what followed) were the full and complete Answer to the Difficulty. The Student replied, *Then, Sir, it is possible the Son might not have been, and the Father might have been without him.* The Professor spoke first something to this, which the Deponent has forgot; but the last Thing he spoke with Relation to this, was precisely these Words, *But the true Answer to it is this, That is a Philosophical Nicety, which we know nothing about:* Depones, *That the Time libelled, he heard the Professor, about the Middle of December 1725, say, That the Persons of the Trinity were indeed all One God, that is, have all the same Infinite Divine Perfections; but whether the Subject of these Perfections be different, was another Question, and perhaps too Metaphysical for us to determine:* Depones, *That he also heard the Professor say, That the Persons of the Trinity were indeed represented to us in Scripture as distinct intelligent Agents, and that they had certainly a distinct personal Agency, otherwise we behoved to say, That the Father was incarnate, and suffered as well as the Son.* And Depones, *That he never heard (to the Deponent's Remembrance) the Professor say, That the Three Persons of the Trinity were Three distinct Beings. Causa scientia patet, &c.*

WILL. BOYD.

WILL. LOVE Moder. p. t.

X. Wit. MR. WILLIAM LANGFORD, Student of Divinity, aged 22 Years, Depones, That he has attended Professor Simson's Lessons since October 1725, but not before; Depones, That he heard a Student, Mr. William Brown, propose an Objection to the Professor, to this Purpose, viz. If the Son of God be not *Independent* or *Self-existent*, (which of these Words were used, or if both were mentioned, the Deponent is not positive) he might not have been. The Deponent is not positive what were the very Words in which the Professor gave an Answer to this Objection; but after his best Re-collection, he thinks they were, *How do you know that?* Or Expressions to the same Meaning: Depones, That he heard the Professor bring a Definition of *Numerical Essence* out of Aristotle, (as the Deponent best remembers) according to which Definition, *Numerical Essence* is the Essence of an individual Person, which cannot be communicated to any other; and in

his Sense, the Professor said, That the *Blessed Trinity* could not be *One* in Number, because then there could be but *One Person in the Godhead*: Is not positive if the Professor used these very Words, but they were these, or Words to that Meaning.

Being interrogate for the Defender, Depones, That he heard the Professor teach, as his own Judgment, the Doctrine of God and the *Holy Trinity*, contained in the Second Chap. of the *Confession of Faith*; also heard him teach the Eight Chap. of the *Confession of Faith*, particularly the Beginning of the Second Section. That the Son of God, the Second Person of the Trinity, is *very and eternal God*, of *one Substance*, and *equal* with the Father: Depones, That he has heard the Professor teach, That the Son *bath Life* in himself, according to that Scripture, *John v. 26.* and prove by the Four usual Arguments, *That the Son is God*; and, that the Professor did not take the Word *God* in an improper Sense, so as to signify one that has *Spiritual Domination or Power*, against which Notion, he warmly recommended to the Students, to read the great and learned *Gossetius* upon the Word *Elchim*: Depones, That he has heard the Professor teach, That the Son is *eternally begotten* of the Father: And the Deponent never heard him insinuate in the least, that he was *created or made*; That the Professor did, last Winter, in general, censure the *Arian Doctrines*, of which there is a full Account in *Theodoret's History*, to which he referred the Students, particularly the Doctrine, *That there was a Time in which the Son was not*; and, *that he is of a mutable Nature, Causa scientiae patet, &c.*

WILL. LANGFORD.  
WILL. LOVE *Modr. p. t.*

*April 25. 1727.*

XI. Wit. MR. CHARLES JERVEY, Student of Divinity, aged 24 Years, Depones, That he has ordinarily attended Professor Sims' n's Lessons in the University of Glasgow, since *October 1725*, and four Sessions preceding that Time; Depones, That he thought the Professor altered his Way of teaching concerning the *Blessed Trinity*, since *October 1725*, from what he had heard him do formerly; Depones, That he was not present when a Student is said to have made the Objection referred to in the Libel, and does not remember to have heard the Professor mention in teaching these Terms, *The Independency and Necessary-existence of our Lord Christ*, except that one Day he heard the Professor speaking of the Term *Independency*, but cannot now remember the Words in which he expressed himself. This last Article in the Deposition refers to the Sessions since *October 1725*. Depones, That since *October 1725*, he has heard the Professor say, *That the Three*

*Three Persons in the Godhead, or the Three Persons in the Trinity, were of one Substance, Power and Eternity;* but does not remember to have heard the Professor give any Name to or Attempt to give any Notion of that Sameness or Oneness, in Power, Substance, or Eternity; and that he neither called it Numerical or Specifical to his Remembrance.

Being interrogate for the Professor, Depones, That in the Session, which began in October 1725, he heard the Professor one Day teach upon the second Chap. of the Confession of Faith, and that to his Remembrance he heard him not deny or impugn any Article of Doctrine contained therein: Depones, That he has heard the Professor say, oftner than once, that the Son is *very and eternal God:* Depones, That he has heard the Professor say, *That the Son is possessed of all Divine Perfections:* And Depones, That he heard the Professor deny that the Son was *created or made,* when refuting the Arian Heresy, and heard him teach that the Son was eternally begotten of the Father. *Causa scientia patet.*

CHA. JERVY.  
JA. ROBE Moderator.

XII. Wit. MR. ALEXANDER CAMPBEL Student of Divinity, aged 20 Years, Depones, That he sometimes attended Professor Simson's Lessons since October 1725, and did not attend before that Time, except one Session immediately preceeding: Depones, He was not present that Day when the Objection referred to in the Libel is said to have been proposed: Depones, That in the Professor's teaching on that Chap. of the Confession of Faith, concerning God and the Trinity, heard him say, *That the Three Persons in the Godhead were so the same, as to be one God in Three Persons,* and does not remember to have heard the Professor give any Name to, or attempt to give any Notion of that Sameness or Oneness; but heard him use these Words, or Words to the same Purpose, when explaining the said Chapter, That by adhering to the Account laid down there, we would be on the one Hand secure from the Objection of the Arians, and from running into Sabellianism on the other: And Depones, That he heard the Professor use one or other of the two following Propositions, viz. *Christus est idem ens cum Patre, tantum modo persona distinctus;* Or, *Christus non est ens distinctum a Patre, sed persona distinctus.*

Being interrogate for the Professor, Depones, That he heard the Professor say, *That all the Divine Perfections belonged to the Son, except the Father's personal Property;* but is not positive the Professor used these very Words: Depones, That he heard the Professor say, *That the Son was very and eternal God,* and that he has heard the Professor say (as the Deponent thought

thought in Opposition to Dr. Clark) That *Christus est Deus natura. Causa scientiae patet, &c.*

ALEX. CAMPBELL.  
J. ROBE Moderator.

XIII. Wit. M<sup>r</sup>. JOHN MUIRHEAD, Student of Divinity, aged 22 Years, Depones, That during the Session begun October 1725, he was only present three Times accidentally at Professor Simson's Lessons, and at these Times the Professor was reading his Paper on the Scriptures: Depones, He attended one Session preceeding that above deponed on, and has attended for most part this present Session. Knows nothing about the Professor's altering his Method (this Session) of teaching anent the Trinity, from what he had formerly used, he not being present when the Professor was on that Subject, but a Part of one Dyt: Depones, That this Session he heard the Professor teach, *That the Three Persons in the Godhead were the same in Substance*; but did not hear him give any Name to, or attempt to give any Notion of that Sameness: Depones, That he also heard the Professor say, that there was one God, that there were Three Persons in the Godhead, the Father, Son and Holy Ghost; that they were so far different, that there were different Properties applied to them, the Father was of None, neither begotten nor proceeding, the Son was begotten of the Father, and the Holy Ghost proceeding from both; but they were so far one, that they might justly be called the *One only living and true God. Causa scientiae patet, &c.*

JO. MUIRHEAD.  
J. ROBE Moderator.

XIV. Wit. M<sup>r</sup>. WILLIAM MONCRIE F, Student of Divinity, aged 20 Years, Depones, That he attended Professor Simson's Lessons in Glasgow last Session from Candlemas, and has attended this Session for ordinary, and also he attended a Session immediately before that begun in October 1725: Depones, That he cannot tell whether the Professor altered his Way of teaching these two last Sessions from what he used formerly, the Session preceeding October 1725. being the first he attended: Depones, That he did not hear the Objection referred to in the Libel, anent the *Independency and Necessary existence of our Saviour Jesus Christ*, he not being present when that Objection is said to have been made: Depones, That this last Winter, he heard the Professor say, That the Argument of Professor Mark against the Eternity of the World, viz. That if the World was Eternal, it must be *Necessarily-existent*, was not conclusive against the Aristotelians: Depones That he heard the Professor say, That *Christus est idem essentia cum Patre, quamvis distincta persona*; But remembers not

not to have heard the Professor give any Name to, or attempt to give any Notion of that *Sameness* or *Oneness*.

Being interrogate for the Professor, Depones, That he has heard him teach, That all the Essential Divine Perfections were common to all the Three Persons in the Godhead, only their personal Properties were not common. *Causa scientia patet, &c.*

WILLIAM MONCRIEF  
JA. ROSS Moderator.

XV. Wit. MR. ALEXANDER BARR, Student of Divinity, aged 20 Years; Depones, That he has frequently attended Professor Simson's Lessons both the Sessions since sometime in November 1725; did not attend any Session preceeding that Time. Depones, That this Session the Professor when speaking on the Second Paragraph of *Mark's* Chap. de trinitate, after reading the first Paragraph viz. *Personae nomen ex scena sumptum est*, said, *Quod si hoc dicatur, tum non recte tribuitur nomen hoc Trinitati, nam in scena idem ille varius induit characteres, viz. modo regis, tum servi, cum interim sit eadem substantia, seu homo, quod in Trinitate non est ita dicendum; dic potius personam originaliter significare determinatum & individuum Ens:* Depones, That he also heard the Professor, when speaking of the *Independency* and *Necessary-existence* of our Lord Christ, say, *That these Terms were not proper or fit to be used when speaking of the Trinity;* and that this was the last Session: Depones, That when a Student Argued, That if the Son was not *Independent*, he was not *Necessarily-existent*, and so might not have been, and the Father might possibly have been without him; he heard the Professor answer, *How do you know that?* Depones, That in the preceeding Session, he heard the Professor express himself dissatisfied with *Mark's* Argument against the Eternity of the World, viz. That if *Eternal*, it must be *Necessarily existent*. And heard the Professor give this Reason for his Dissatisfaction, *Num Christus est eternus, sed non est Ens Necessarium, seu non Necesario existit:* Depones, That this Session he heard the Professor read the foresaid Argument of *Mark*; and thereupon say, *Ens eternum est perfectissimum, interim potuit Deus dare enti durationem illimitatam; id est, facere ut sit eternum. non tamen esset independens, cum debet semper causam agnoscere, quam causam habuit:* Depones, That this Session he heard the Professor, when teaching upon Chapter 2d. Paragraph 3d. of the Confession of Faith, say, *The Persons of the Blessed Trinity are so distinct, as that the personal Properties of the one cannot be those of the other; but not so as to be specifically Three Gods, and they so agree as to be one God, yet not numerically one in Essence;* but the Deponent cannot be positive, that every one of the Words in the Article immediately above, are the Words used by the Professor; neither can he say, that any of them are his

his own Words and not the Professor's: Depones, That this Session, he heard the Professor say, when God the Father is said to have begotten the Son, *It is not to be understood as in any Part of Time, and whatever is before Time is from Eternity, tho' in the Order of Things, we consider the Father as before the Son and Holy Ghost, but not in Time.* And when reading *Pistet* he heard the Professor say, That, *Si Filius genitus fuit ante mundi creationem, tum ab eterno, quia eternitatis a parte ante non datur ullum momentum, quod sit proprius creationem actionis.* *Causa scientiae patet, &c.*

ALEX. BARR.

JA. ROBE Moderator.

XVI. Wit. MR. GEORGE MEEK, Student of Divinity, aged 19 Years, Depones, That he attended Professor Simson's Lessons at Glasgow, for ordinary since sometime in November 1725, but not any Time before: Depones, That when the Objection was made by a Student, as mentioned in the Libel, and former Depositions, he heard the Professor answer, *Neither you nor I know any Thing about that.*

Being interrogate for the Professor, Depones, That he heard the Professor teach, *as his own Opinion, That the Son is very and Eternal God, of one Substance and equal with the Father.* *Causa scientiae patet, &c.*

GEO. MEEK.

JA. ROBE Moderator.

II. Wit. MR. JAMES RITCHIE, former Deponent, re-examined, being interrogate for the Professor upon Questions not formerly asked at him: Depones, That since the Beginning of December 1725, he heard the Professor assert, as his own Opinion and defend, *That the Son of God was not made or created, but eternally begotten of the Father; That he was by Nature God; That he was more properly God than the Son of any Man could be a Man, because endued with the very same Perfections wherewith God the Father is:* And Depones, That he heard the Professor make Use of an Argument to prove, That the Son of God was not created, taken from that Text in the first Chapter of the Gospel according to John, *All Things were made by him, and without him was not any Thing made that was made.* This Text, the Professor said, proved, that the Son of God was not among the Number of Creatures, but infinitely above them, *seeing every Thing that was made was made by the Son:* Depones, That he has heard the Professor refute Dr. Clark's Notion of a God, when he places it in *Spiritual Domination.* *Causa scientiae patet, &c.*

JA. RITCHIE.

XVII. Wit.

XVII. Wit.

**M**R. THOMAS HAMILTON, Student of Divinity, aged 20 Years, Depones, That he for ordinary attended Professor Simson's Lessons in Glasgow, since October 1725: Depones, That upon a Student's urging a Difficulty from something that the Professor was saying; the Difficulty was, *That then the Son would not be Independent, or would be Dependent.* The Professor answered, That these Terms were unfit. The Student urged further, That then the Son might not have been; to which the Professor answered, *How do you know that?* or, *How do we know that?* Depones, the Professor added, (whether after the urging the first Part of the Difficulty, or after both Parts, the Deponent cannot be positive) *That we are not so nicely to Philosophize, when speaking of the Persons of the Trinity;* or, *That these were Philosophical Niceties:* Depones, That he heard the Professor say, That the Persons of the Trinity were not of the same *specifical Essence,* because that would be *Tribelism,* nor of the same *numerical Essence,* if taken in the Sense it was taken by some, applied only to one Person, for then it would be *Sabellianism:* Depones, That he heard the Professor, when speaking of the Trinity, say, That it was *Talis unitas quæ excludit Tribelismum ab una parte, Sabellianismum ab altera, quæ includit tres personas & unum Deum.*

Being interrogate for the Professor, Depones, That he has heard him teach, that the Son was *Very God,* and prove it from his *creating the World:* And, That when the Professor was teaching on *Chap. 2d. Par. 3d.* of the *Confession of Faith,* he heard him say, That it was the same Substance, when speaking of the Persons of the Trinity; and added, that it must be so, because of the *Simplicity of the Divine Perfections:* Depones, That he remembers, the Professor made Use of some Argument for proving, That the Son was *Eternal. Causa scientia patet, &c.*

THO. HAMILTON.  
JA. ROSE Moderator.

XVIII. Wit.

**M**RD. DAVID BANNANTYNE, Student of Divinity, aged 20 Years, Depones, That he has frequently attended Professor Simson's Lessons since October 1725, and attended some Time of the Session preceding October 1725: Depones, *Ignorat* as to the Libel.

Being interrogate for the Professor, Depones, He has heard him teach, That all the *essential Perfections* of the Father agreed to the Son, but the *personal Property* of the Father could not be applied to the Son. *Causa scientia patet, &c.*

DAVID BANNANTYNE.  
JA. ROSE Moderator.

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XIX. Wit.

XIX. Wit. MR. WILLIAM MILLER, Student of Divinity, aged 24 Years, Depones, That he has sometimes attended Professor Simson's Lessons since October 1725, and partly that Session begun in October 1724: Depones, That this Session of the College, he heard the Professor teach, when speaking of the Unity or Oneness of the Substance of the Persons of the Godhead, that it could not be one *specifical Substance*, else it would lead to Tritheism, it could not be *numerical*, as applied to Creatures, else it would lead to that of Sabellianism, or be the same with the μονογενος which is their Character. But the Orthodox Divines made Use of the Term *One Numerical*, or *One Substance in Number*, in a very good Sense; to which he agreed, and added, as the best Answer that we could give to the Adversaries of that Doctrine, *That in the Unity of the Godhead there were Three Persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, who were sufficiently distinguished by their personal Properties; yet, tho' they were thus distinguished, they are but One God, both according to Scripture and Reason.*

Being interrogate for the Professor, Depones, That he heard the Professor teach, That the Son of God, the Second Person of the Trinity, *is very and Eternal God, of one Substance, and equal with the Father*: Depones, That he has several Times heard the Professor affirm, *That all the Divine Perfections belong to the Son, as well as to the Father, only the Father's personal Property did not agree to the Son. Causa scientiae patet, &c.*

WILL. MILLER.  
JA. ROSE Moderator.

April 26. 1727.

XX. Wit. MR. WILLIAM McCCLAE, Student of Divinity, aged 19 Years, Depones, That he has attended Professor Simson's Lessons since October 1725: Depones, That when the Professor was speaking of the *personal Properties* of the Father and the Son, Mr. Brown, a Student, proposed an Objection to this Purpose, *If the Son was not Independent, then he was not Necessarily-existent*; and if so, then it was possible he might not have existed, and the Father might have been without him. To which the Professor answered, *That this Affair was not determined by Reason, and these Terms were not used in Scripture, and were impertinent*: Depones, That he heard the Professor say, That being of None might be taken in such a Sense as would exclude it from being a Property of the Son: Depones, That he heard the Professor say, That the Unity of the Three Persons of the Trinity was not *specifical*, because this would be to make them *Three Gods*: Depones, That he has heard the Professor say, *That the Man-*

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ner of this Unity was not revealed in Scripture, and that it seemed to be above our Capacities to conceive it.

Being interrogate for the Professor, Depones, That he has heard the Professor teach, as his own Opinion, the Doctrine contained in the second Chap. of the *Confession of Faith*: Depones, As to Christ's being the true God, and a God of infinite Perfections; this the Professor proved in his Prelection on the eight Chap. of the *Confession*, from that Notion of God, with which the whole Scripture is ushered in, viz. That of being Creator; and seeing Christ is said to be the Creator in the first of John's Gospel, therefore he must be the same with that only true God spoken of by all the Writers of the Old Testament. Christ's being the true God he proved likewise from the Import of the Original Words in *Isaiah*, ix Chap. and 6 Verse, *El Gibbor*, where he observed that Word *El*, with the adjoined Epithet, *Gibbor*, could be applied to no Being but the true God, and that this was in the Session begun in October 1725, and the Professor said the same in refuting Dr. Clark's Opinion: Depones, That the said last Session he has heard the Professor teach, That all the Divine Perfections belonging to the Father, belonged also to the Son, but the personal Property: Also, that he has heard the Professor teach, That Jesus Christ is said to be the Creator, and that to create required infinite Perfection, and a Being of infinite Perfection could not be created: Further, That the Professor taught the Son was eternally begotten of the Father without beginning of Time, and the Deponent heard him teach so, and that the Son was the same with the Father: To prove which, among other Reasons, he made Use of that Text in the first Epistle of John, *And there are three that bear Record in Heaven, &c.* The Authentickness of which Text he said was disputed by some, but he asserted it: Depones, That he heard the Professor teach that Jesus Christ, by his proper Perfections, created the World; and when it is said of him in the New Testament, by whom also he made the Worlds, the Particle *sia* was not to be understood instrumentaliter. *Causa scientiae patet, &c.*

WIL. McCRAE.

J. ROBE Moderator.

XXI. Wit. M<sup>R</sup>. JOHN ANDERSON, Student of Divinity, aged 23 Years, Depones, That he frequently attended Professor Simson's Lessons since October 1725, and four Sessions preceding that Time: Depones, That he did not hear the Objection mentioned in the Libel made to the Professor, because he was not present in the Hall, when that Objection is said to have been made: Depones, That since October 1725, he has heard the Professor assert, That there was one God and three Persons, and that these three were One, so

as to be the same in Substance, Power and Eternity; and does not remember to have heard the Professor give the Distinction of Numerical or Specifical Oneness, or give any Name to, or Notion of that Oneness, beside what is abovementioned.

Being interrogate for the Professor: Depones, That he has heard the Professor assert, That the second Person of the Trinity was no other God from the Father, and that the Son was possessed of all Divine Perfections with the Father, his personal Property excepted: Depones, That he has heard him assert, That the Son was eternally begotten of the Father, and was no Creature. *Causa scientia patet, &c.*

J. ANDERSON.  
JA. ROBE Moderator.

XXII. Wit. MR. LEWIS CHAPMAN, Student of Divinity, aged 23 Years, Depones, That he attended Professor Simson's Lessons since October 1725, but not before that Time: Depones, That he has heard the Professor say, That the Term of *Independency*, when made use of on the Subject of the personal Properties of the Father and the Son, could not be so pertinently used as Scriptural Expressions; but does not remember to have heard the Professor quarrel the Term *Necessary existence* on that Subject: And Depones, That the Professor's saying, That the Term *Independency*, &c. was in Answer to a Question or Objection made by Mr. Brown Student: Depones, That he has heard the Professor teach, as his own Opinion, That the Terms Numerical and Specifical, when applied to Substances, and taken in the Sense frequently used in the Schools, ought not, nor could not be applied to the Persons of the Trinity, because the Term Numerical, when taken in that Sense, excluded Three Persons, and that of Specifical would infer Three Gods; but that this we were always to maintain, That there must be Three Persons and One God, in Opposition to Sabellianism on the one Hand, and Tritheism on the other: Depones, That he has also heard the Professor teach, That the Three Persons of the Trinity were the same in Substance, equal in Power and Glory, and distinguished only by their personal Properties; but does not remember to have heard him give any other Name to, or Notion of that Oneness, but what is above-mentioned.

Being interrogate for the Professor, Depones, That he has heard him assert and prove, That the Son was not, or could not be said to be created or made; and, that the Son must be eternally begotten, without any Beginning of Time: Depones, That he has heard the Professor assert, That the naming the Father *Causa Filii*, was a very improper Way of speaking, and that *Pater est prior Filio paternitate*, but not *prior tempore*: De-

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Depones, That he has heard the Professor say, That there was an utter Disparity betwixt the Eternity of the World and the Eternal Generation of the Son of God, and gave this Reason for it, That the World must be finite; whereas the Son is of infinite and illimitable Perfections: Depones, That he heard the Professor say, That the best Notion we could have of the Son's Eternal Generation, was given us in John v. 26. As the Father bath Life in himself, so he hath given to the Son to have Life in himself. *Causa scientia patet, &c.*

LEWIS CHAPMAN.

JA. ROB Moderator.

XXIII. Wit. MR. ALEXANDER McCULLOCH,

Preacher of the Gospel, aged 26 Years, Depones, That he has sometimes attended Professor Simson's Lessons since October 1725, and for two Sessions preceding that Time: Depones, That the Professor altered his Teaching concerning the Doctrine of the Blessed Trinity since October 1725, in what he observed him to do before that Time: Depones, That he heard the Professor, before October 1725, give the following Caution to the Students, viz. That the Term Person, when applied to the Blessed Three in the God-head, was not to be taken precisely in the same Sense, as when spoken of Creatures; and does not remember to have heard him give it since the said Month of October 1725: Depones, He was not in the Hall when the Objection referred to in the Libel is said said to have been made.

Being interrogate for the Professor, Depones, In the Session immediately before this, he heard the Professor teach, That the Son of God, the Second Person of the Trinity, is Very and Eternal God, of the same Substance, and Equal with the Father: Depones, That he has heard him also say, *Christus est idem  
ens cum Patre, tantummodo persona distinctus*; and has heard him prove, That the Son is eternally begotten of the Father, without Beginning of Duration; and has heard him make Use of that Scripture, John v. 26. in explaining the said Eternal Generation. *Causa scientia patet, &c.*

ALEX. McCULLOCH.

JA. ROB Moderator.

XXIV. Wit. MR. FREDERICK CARMICHAEL,

Student of Divinity, aged 19 Years, Depones, That he attended Professor Simson's Lessons since October 1725, but never before: Depones, Ignorat as to the whole Points of the Libel.

Being interrogate for the Professor, Depones, That he heard the Professor teach upon the 2d Chap. of the Confession of Faith; and, that he taught the Propositions therein as his own

own Opinion, and recommended them as the best Form of Words he had ever met with, for expressing what the Scripture taught us concerning the Mystery of the Trinity: Depones, That he heard the Professor teach on the Eighth Chap. of the Confession of Faith, and particularly teach, as his own Opinion, That the Son of God, the Second Person of the Trinity, is very and eternal God, of one Substance, and equal with the Father: Depones, That he has also heard the Professor assert and prove, That the Son of God was neither created nor made; and heard him, when upon Pictet, assert, That Christus, Filius Dei, *creaturas omnes dignitate infinite superat, cum omnes creaverit, non ut instrumentum, sed per effectum suæ potentie*: Depones, He heard the Professor remark, That to call the Father Causa Filii, was a harsh Way of Speaking; and that he has heard him, in Opposition to that Way of speaking, oftner than once, use these Words, *Pater est prior Elio ordine & paternitate, sed non tempore. Causa scientiae potest, &c.*

FRED. CARMICHAEL.  
JA. ROBE Moderator.

**XXV. Wit. MR. JAMES PEDDEN,** Student of Divinity, aged 23 Years, Depones, That he has attended Professor Simson's Lessons since October 1725, and for two Sessions preceeding that Time: Depones, That he thought the Professor altered his Teaching concerning the Doctrine of the Blessed Trinity since October 1725, from what he had observed formerly: Depones, that he thinks he heard the Professor say, That the Word Person, when applied to the Blessed Three in the Godhead, was not to be taken in the same Sense, as when spoken of Creatures, before October 1725; but does not remember, that he heard the Professor say so the two last Years: Depones, That he was present when a Student propounded an Objection to the Professor, but does not remember distinctly either what the Objection was, or what Answer the Professor made to it; but remembers it was Mr. William Brown a Student, who made the Objection, and that it was in the publick Place where the Professor ordinarily teaches.

Being interrogate for the Professor, Depones, That since October 1725, he has heard the Professor read and explain the 2d Chap. of the Confession of Faith, and does not remember, that he denied or impugned any Article therein: Depones, That last Session he heard him read and explain the 8th Chap. of the said Confession, and teach, as his own Opinion, That the Son of God, the Second Person of the Trinity, is very and eternal God, of one Substance, and equal with the Father; and that as the Deponent thought: Depones, That he has heard the Professor say, That the Son of God was neither made nor creat-

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created, and that the Son was eternally begotten of the Father.  
*Causa scientia patet, &c.*

J. PEEBLES.

J. ROBB Moderator.

XXVI. Wit. **M** R. JAMES STIRLING, Student of Divinity, aged 25 Years: Depones, That he has attended Professor Simson's Lessons since October 1725, and a Part of two Sessions preceding that Time: Depones, That he having heard him teach that Doctrine only one Session preceding October 1725, he did not observe any Alteration of the Professor's Teaching on the Subject of the Trinity since that Time: Depones, That he was present when an Objection was made by Mr. William Brown a Student; and remembers the Conclusion of the Objection was, *That then the Son of God would not be Independent*; and the Professor's Answer was, *These Terms Dependent and Independent were not mentioned in Scripture, and consequently were not fit to be used upon this Subject*: Depones, That this Session he heard the Professor say, That the Three Persons in the Trinity could not be said to be either of one numerical Substance, or one specifical Substance, as these Terms were used by the Aristotelian Philosophers, when applied to rational Creatures; because if they were said to be of one numerical Substance, as that Term is used by these Philosophers, they would be but one Person, and if they were said to be of one specifical Substance, they would be Three Gods: Depones, That he heard the Professor say, that they were so One as to be Three Persons, and so Three Persons as to be but one God; but does not remember to have heard the Professor give any Name to, or attempt to give any Notion of that Oneness.

Being interrogate for the Professor: Depones, That he heard him teach the Second Chapter of the Confession of Faith, and express himself well satisfied with the Doctrine therein, and also heard him teach the Eighth Chapter of the said Confession, and teach, as his own Opinion, That the Son of God, the Second Person of the Trinity, is very and eternal God, of one Substance, and equal with the Father, and that the Son of God was neither created nor made: Depones, That he has heard the Professor affirm and prove, that the Son of God was eternally begotten of the Father without Beginning of Duration; and that he has heard him affirm, That the Son was by Nature God, and infinitely above all created Beings whatsoever; and has heard him affirm, That *Pater est prior Filio non tempore sed ordine*, and that whatever could be affirmed of the Father, ought to be, or should be affirmed of the Son, excepting the Father's Personal Property. *Causa scientia patet, &c.*

J. STIRLING.

J. ROBB Moderator.

XXVIII. Wit.

**XXVII.** Wit. **M**R. JOHN M'ALPINE, Student of Divinity, aged 23 Years, Depones, That for ordinary he attended Professor Simson's Lessons in the Session begun October 1725, and sometime this Session, and for Four Sessions preceding October 1725: Depones, That according to the best Judgment of the Deponent, the Professor did not alter the Substance of his Doctrine on the Trinity since October 1725, from what he observed formerly; but that he heard him in the former Sessions, the Time of the Polemick Conferences on the Subject of the Blessed Trinity, use to give the following Caution. viz. That the Term Person, when applied to the Blessed Three in the Godhead, was not to be taken precisely in the same Sense as when spoken of Creatures; but does not remember to have heard him give that Caution since October 1725: And Depones, That he did not hear the Professor have these Polemick Conferences since that Time, in Respect of his bad State of Health: Depones, That to the best of his Remembrance, he was absent when the Objection referred to in the Libel is said to have been made: Depones, That this Session he heard the Professor say, That there was such an Unity in the Godhead, as was consistent with a Distinction of Persons, which ought always to be maintained against the Sabellians, and that there was such a Distinction of Persons as was consistent with Unity, which ought to be maintained against the Arians. And that the Professor added, immediately after these Expressions, That perhaps it was impossible for us, while here, to know the precise Meaning of that Oneness, or Distinction of Persons, and cited that Text, Who shall declare his Generation.

Being interrogate for the Professor, Depones, That he has heard him teach the Second Chapter of the Confession of Faith, and also the Eighth Chapter of the said Confession, and did not hear the Professor express himself dissatisfied with any Article therein, but recommended them to the Students as the best Expressions they could make use of to express themselves on the Subject mentioned in these Chapters: Depones, He has heard the Professor assert and prove, That the Son was not created. *Causa scientiae patet, &c.*

JO. M'ALPINE.  
JA. ROBE Moderator.

**XXVIII.** Wit. **M**R. WILLIAM COATS, Preacher of the Gospel, aged 27 Years, Depones, That he attended Professor Simson's Lessons the Session of the College immediately preceding this, and for several Sessions before that: Depones, That he thought the Professor altered his Teaching on the Doctrine of the Blessed Trinity, the last Session he attended, from what he had heard him in former Years:

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Depones, That he heard Mr. William Brown, a Student, make an Objection, but minds nothing distinctly about it, or the Answer the Professor made to it.

Being interrogate for the Professor ; Depones, That the last Session he attended, he heard the Professor teach on the Second and Eighth Chapters of the *Confession of Faith*, and teach the Doctrines therein *as his own Opinion*. And alio, Depones, That he heard the Professor refute all the Branches of the *Arian Heresy*, and particularly teach, *That the Son of God was neither created nor made, but was eternally begotten of the Father, and that he was infinitely above all Creatures as being Creator*: Depones, That he has heard the Professor say, *That every Thing that is to be affirmed of the Father, is to be affirmed of the Son, except the Father's personal Property*; and this he has heard the Professor several Times affirm. *Causa scientia patet, &c.*

WIL. COATS.  
JA. ROBE Moderator.

XXIX. Wit. **M**R. ALEXANDER JOHNSTON, Student of Divinity, aged 29 Years, Depones, That he has attended Professor Simson's Lessons sometimes since October 1725, and four Sessions of the College before that : Depones, That he observed no Alteration that the Professor made in his Teaching since October 1725, from what he had formerly, only that he brought in Pearson on the Creed since that Time : Depones, That he has heard the Professor give the following Caution, either the last Session, or some of the preceeding Sessions, *viz.* The Caution first mentioned in the Libel : Depones, That when a Student made an Objection to the Purpose of the Objection laid in the Libel, about the Son's being *Independent* of the Father ; the Professor answered, *Do you thinke he is Independent of his Father; certainly none can suppose or affirm that, and that he is not begotten, altho' our shallow or finite Capacities cannot possibly comprehend, or have any Notion of the Modus or Manner of his Generation*; and afterwards the Professor confuted the *Arian* and *Sabellian* Notion with respect to the Trinity. But the Deponent does not remember the Professor's Words, when confuting them. *Causa scientia patet, &c.*

ALEX. JOHNSTON.  
JA. ROBE Moderator.

XXX. Wit. **M**R. George Adam, Student of Divinity, aged 27 Years, Depones, That he sometimes attended Professor Simson's Lessons, the Sessions begun in October 1725, and Three Sessions preceeding that Time : Depones, That he thought the Professor altered his Teaching on the

Trinity, the last Year he attended, from what he used formerly.  
*Causa scientiae patet, &c.*

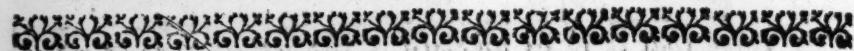
GEO. ADAM.

JA. ROBE Moderator.

III. A

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**C**ompeared JAMES MILLER, Preacher, residing in Blantyre, and declared, That he did not attend the Professor's Lessons the Time libelled, and was only present occasionally a Part of one Dyet when the Professor was teaching on the Commands ; and therefore the Presbytery find it not necessary to take his Oath.



**ABBR E V I A T E of the Proof, taken from  
the Depositions of the Witnesses, digested ac-  
cording to the different Articles of the Libel  
admitted to Probation.**

I. Art. **J**AMES SLOSS, first Witness, present one Day when teaching on the *Eternity of the Son*, That the Professor used before October to give the Caution libelled, but does not remember he gave it, or had Occasion to give it that Day. 2d Wit. *Ritchie*, That he gave the Caution before 1725, but he heard it not the following, the Professor not being on the Subject when he attended. 3d *W. Ed. Boyd*, Thinks the Professor altered his Method. 4th *W. Alexander Duncan*, That he thinks he altered his Teaching, and that formerly he gave this Caution, *Persona non hic sumitur eodem sensu, ac quando applicatur hominibus, sed sensu analogico*, but heard it not since. 5th *W. William Denniston*. Altered his Teaching in one Particular, gave the Caution libelled before 1725, knows not if he gave it since, was not present last Session, but was present this, and remembers not that he gave it this Session, and remembers not that ever he gave it since 1725. 9th *W. William Boyd*, Heard him give the Caution before 1725, heard it not since, not being present when that Subject was taught. 11th *W. Charles Fervey*, He thought the Professor altered his Way of Teaching. 15th *W. Alexander Barr*, *Personæ nomen ex Scena sump-  
tum, &c. Vid. Pag. 87.* 23d *W. Alexander McCulloch*, The Professor alter'd Teaching since October 1725, before which he gave the Caution in the Libel, and remembers not to have heard it since.

II. Art. **N**OT proven by Witnesses.

III. Art.

III. Art. **WILLIAM BROWN**, 6th Witness, Heard  
 the Question proposed, upon the Professor's speaking of the Son's deriving his Perfections from the Father, and an Objection was made, that such a Way of speaking seemed to derogate from the Son's Independency. Professor replied, If Independency, or the Word *Independent*, be taken in such a Sense as to include the personal Property of the Father, it could not be applied to the Son. The Objector insisted, That if the Son was not *Independent*, in the same Sense in which the Father was, he could not see that he could be *Necessarily-existent*. Professor replied, These Terms were impertinent; and not to be used in speaking of the *Trinity*, or Words to that Purpose. Objector added, And if the Son be not *Necessarily-existent*, 'tis possible he might never had a Being. The Professor said, We know not these Things, or we know not whether he might have had a Being or not; but is not positive which of these it was, but thinks it was one of them. *George Meek*. 16th Wit. When the Objection in the Libel was made, heard the Professor answer, Neither you nor I know any Thing about that. *Alexander Barr*, 15th Witness, Heard the Professor say of the *Independency* and *Necessary-existence* of Christ, these Terms were not fit or proper to be used in speaking of the *Trinity*, the preceeding Session of the College; and when a Student argued, if the Son was not *independent*, he was not *necessarily-existent*, and so might not have been, and the Father might possibly have been without him; The Professor answered, *How do you know that?* *Thomas Hamilton*, 17th W. That upon a Difficulty proposed, *viz.* Then the Son would not be *independent*, the Professor answered, These Terms were unfit. It was urged, Then the Son might not have been; Professor answered, *How do you or we know that?* And added (whether after the first Part or both, not positive) that we are not so nicely to philosophize, when speaking of the Persons of the *Trinity*, or that these were philosophical Niceties. *Alexander Duncan* 4th W. That he heard a Question proposed, where the *Necessary-existence* of Christ came to be handled, and thinks the Professor answered, *We do not know, or, it is a Thing we know nothing about*, or other Words could have no other *necessary Meaning*; that the Professor did say some Term or Terms the Students used were impertinent, but dares not descend on the Particular Terms. *William McClae* 20th W. heard upon the Objection, if the Son was *Independent*, then he was not *Necessarily-existent*; and if so, it was possible he might not have existed. The Professor answered, That this Affair was not determined by Reason, and these Terms were not used in Scripture, and were impertinent.

IV. Art. **T**hird Witness, *Edward Boyd*, That the Professor seemed dissatisfied with *Markius's* Arguments, and added, *Christus est eternus, sed non ens necessarium*, or, *non necessario existit*, or, *non est necessarius*, cannot tell which, but is positive as to one of them. 4th W. *Alexander Duncan*, That he found Fault with *Mark's* Argument libelled, and asserted to the best of his Remembrance, *Christus est eternus, non tamen necessarius*, but is not positive these are the Professor's exact Words, and that this was the Session preceding the current Session. 15th W. *Alexander Barr*. The Professor appeared dissatisfied with *Mark's* Argument against the Eternity of the World, and gave this Reason, *Nam Christus est eternus, sed non ens necessarium, seu non necessario existit*. See Deposition, Witness 15th.

V. Art. **T**hird Witness, *Edward Boyd*, That he heard Professor say, That we were not to understand by *Oneness*, either a *Numerical* or *Specifical Essence*; for if *Numerical*, it would be *Sabellianism*, and if *Specifical*, it would make *three Gods*, but that it was *talis essentia quæ admittit tres personas & unum Deum*; but remembers not if the Remark on *Oneness* was given as the Professor's own Judgment, or that of the *Nicene Fathers*, but thinks *talis essentia, &c.* was given as his own Opinion; remembers not that he gave any other Name to, or Notion of that *Oneness*. 5th W. *William Denniston*, That he gave it as his own Opinion, that the three Persons in the *Trinity* are not to be said to be either *Numerically* or *Specifically one in Essence*, and that it was such an *Oneness* as included *Three Persons*, and excluded *Three Gods*, and heard him give no other Name to the *Oneness*, nor no other Notion of it; and uttered the above Propositions in Latin. 10th W. *William Langford*, heard the Professor bring a Definition out of *Aristotle*, (as he best remembers) according to which, *Numerical Essence* is the *Essence* of an individual Person, which cannot be communicated to any others; and in this Sense the Professor said, That the *Blessed Trinity* could not be *one in Number*, because then there would be but *one Person* in the Godhead, and is not positive if these be the very Words. 11th W. *Charles Fervey*, heard the Professor say, That the three Persons of the Godhead were of *one Substance, Power and Eternity*, but does not remember he heard him give any Name to, or Notion of that *Oneness of Substance, Power and Eternity*, and that he neither called it *Numerical* nor *Specifical* to his Remembrance. 12th W. *Alexander Campbell*, he heard the Professor say, The three Persons of the Godhead were so the same, as to be *one God in three Persons*, but heard him not give any Name to, or Notion of that *Same-ness*,

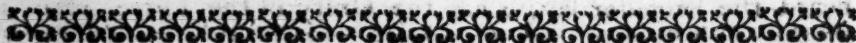
ness, and he used these Words, or Words to the same Purpose; and this he said in teaching *Conf. Chap. 2.* of God and the *Holy Trinity*; and in teaching the same Chapter, he heard him say, That by adhering to the Account laid down there, we would on the one Hand be secured from the Objections of the *Arians*, and from running into *Sabellianism* on the other. 12th W. *John Muirhead*, heard the Professor teach, *That the three Persons in the Godhead, were the same in Substance*, but did not hear him give any Name to, or Notion of that *Sameness*. 15th W. *Alexander Barr*, heard the Professor say, The Persons of the *Blessed Trinity* were so distinct, as that the *personal Properties* of the One cannot be those of the Other, but not so as to be *Specifically* Three Gods; and they so agree as to be one God, yet not *Numerically* one in *Essence*: But the Deponent cannot be positive, that every one of the Words in the Article immediately above, are the Words used by the Professor, neither can he say that any of them are his own Words, and not the Professor's. *William McClae* 20th W. heard the Professor say, That the Unity of the Three Persons of the *Trinity* was not *Specifical*, because this would make them *Three Gods*. *That the Manner of this Unity was not revealed in Scripture, and it seemed to be above our Capacities to conceive it.*

VI. Art. **T**hird Witness, *Edward Boyd* remembers, That he said the Three Persons were all indeed *one God*, and had the same infinite Divine Perfections, but heard not the other Words, *viz. Whether the Subject, &c.* 9th W. *William Boyd*, That in December 1725, Professor said, The Persons in the *Trinity* were all indeed one God, *that is*, have all the same infinite Divine Perfections; *but whether the Subject of these Perfections be different was another Question, and perhaps too Metaphysical for us to determine.*

VII. Art. **S**ixth Wit. *William Brown*, That the Professor said in private Conversation, that in the *Trinity* there were three intelligent Agents or Agencies; which further explaining, the Deponent replied, *Then there must likewise be Three Beings*. Professor answered, as he remembers, *No doubt of that, or certainly there must*, or Words to that Purpose; this happened in the Professor's House about the End of *March 1726*. 7th W. *James Bane*, That he has heard the Professor say, as he thinks, to the best of his Remembrance, *That in the Trinity there are Three intelligent Beings, and that it was said sometime in the Session begun in October 1725.*

VIII. Art. *James Sloss* 1st Witnes, That he heard him teach *Deus Pater fuit ante Deum filium, non tempore sed causalitate*, and also these Words, *Ni supponamus Deum non posse creare ab eterno*, but is not positive but something interveened betwixt the two Propositions; took the two Propositions to be the Professor's own Opinion.

ART I. Probation continued. *James Peden* 25. W. thought the Professor altered teaching, and gave Caution in Libel. *J. McAlpin* 27th W. The Professor did not alter Substance of Doctrine, heard him give Caution in Libel on Polemick Conference before October 1725, but heard it not since, because there was no such Conference, the Professor being in ill Health. *William Coats* 28th W. altered his teaching. *George Adam* 30th W. thinks he altered his teaching concerning the Trinity the last Session he attended.



### Particular EXCULPATION.

I. Art. **T**HE Professor refers to his Defences on this Article of the Libel, Page 52, &c.

II. Art. **R**Efers to his Letter to the Presbytery, and *Answers* to the Presbytery's References on this Subject on Passage Third in his Letter, against which the Presbytery object in their References, Page 26, — 28, &c.

III. Art. **M**R. *Ritchie*, 2d W. That he heard an Argument proposed to the Professor, whereof the Conclusion was, *Then the Son is Dependent*; Professor answered, The Terms *Dependent* and *Independent*, could not be properly applied to the Relations of the Divine Persons. *William Brown* 6th W. Professor replied, If *Independency* be taken in such a Sense, as to include the personal Property of the Father, it could not be applied to the Son. *William Boyd*, 9th W. A Student proposed a Question, *Whether or not, what the Professor said, seemed to derogate from the Son's Independency?* Professor answered, *Just as you understand the Word Independent*; and distinguished its Meaning, just as the Professor's Letter and Answers, and said, That the Words *Dependent* and *Independent* were very improper and ambiguous, because ordinarily spoken of Creatures, and so not fit to be used with respect

spect to the Persons of the Trinity, or to express their personal Relations by ; *Vide Deposition*, Wit. 9th, *Lewis Chapman*, 22d W. Heard the Professor say, in Answer to a Question or Objection, That the Term *Independency*, when made Use of on the Subject of the personal Properties of the Father and Son, could not be so pertinently used as Scriptural Expressions ; but does not remember he quarrelled the Term *Necessary-existence* on that Subject. *James Stirling*, 26. W. Heard an Objection by a Student, the Conclusion whereof was, Then the Son of God would not be *Independent* : and the Professor answered, These Terms Dependent and Independent were not mentioned in Scripture, and consequently were not fit to be used on this Subject. *Alexander Johnston*, 29th W. That he heard the Objection libelled made by a Student, about the Son's being *Independent* of the Father ; the Professor answered, Do you think he is *Independent* of his Father ? Certainly none can affirm that he is not begotten, altho' our shallow or finite Capacities cannot possibly comprehend, or have any Notion of the modus or Manner of his Generation. See Defences on Article II. Page 53.

**IV. Art.** *Edward Boyd*, 3d W. That this current Session, *E* the Professor said, The Argument in *Mark* was not good against *Aristotle*, and heard him not give the same Reason for it as he had given the former Year. *William Montcraig*, 14th W. Heard the Professor say, Professor *Mark*'s Argument against the Eternity of the World, was not conclusive against the *Aristotelians*. *Lewis Chapman*, 22 W. Heard the Professor say, There was an utter Disparity betwixt the Eternity of the World, and the eternal Generation of the Son of God, and gave this Reason, That the World must be finite, whereas the Son is of infinite and unlimited Perfections. See Defences against this Article of the Libel, Page 54. &c. called Article III. in the Defences.

**V. Art.** *William Langford*, 10th W. Heard the Professor bring a Definition of Numerical Essence out of *Aristotle*, as he best remembers, according to which, Numerical Essence is the Essence of an individual Person, which cannot be communicated to any other ; and in this Sense the Professor said, That the Blessed Trinity could not be One in Number, because then there would be but one Person in the Godhead ; is not positive if these be the very Words, but they were these, or Words to that Meaning. *Alexander Campbell*, 12th W. He heard the Professor say, The Three Persons of the Godhead were so the same as to be One God in Three Persons, and by adhering to Account laid down, Confes. Chap. 2, § 3. We would, on the one Hand be secured from the Objections of the *Arians*, and from running into *Sabellianism* on the other.

other. *John Muirhead*, 13th W. Heard the Professor say, That the Three Persons of the Godhead were the *same* in Substance, but heard him not give any Name to, or Notion of that *Sameness*; and, that there was *One God*, and that there were *Three Persons in the Godhead, the Father, Son and Holy Ghost*; that they were so far different, that there were different Properties applied to them, *the Father was of None, neither begotten nor proceeding, the Son was begotten of the Father, and the Holy Ghost proceeded from both*; but they were so far One, that they ought justly be called, *The One only living and True God*. *William Moncrief*, 14th W. Heard the Professor say, *Christus est idem essentia cum Patre quamvis distincta persona*. *Thomas Hamilton*, 17th W. That the Professor said, The Persons of the Trinity were not of the same *specifical Essence*, because that would be *Tritheism*, nor of the same *Numerical Essence*, if taken in the Sense it was taken by some, applied only to *one Person*, for then it would be *Sabellianism*; and said, *It was talis unitas quæ excludit Tritheismum ab una parte, Sabellianismum ab altera, quæ includit tres personas & unum Deum*; That it was the same Substance, when speaking of the Trinity, because of the Simplicity of the Divine Perfections. *William Miller*, 19th W. That he heard the Professor, this Session, teach, when speaking of the *Oneness* of the Substance of the Persons of the Godhead, That it could not be one *specifical Substance*, else it would lead to *Tritheism*, and could not be *Numerical*, as applied to Creatures, else it would lead to *Sabellianism*, or be the same with the *Monousion*, which is their Character; but the Orthodox Divines made use of the Term, one *Numerical*, or one *Substance* in Number in a very good Sense, to which he agreed; and added as the best Answer that we could give to the Adversaries of that Doctrine, *That in the Unity of the Godhead, there were Three Persons, the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, who were sufficiently distinguished by their personal Properties, yet tho' they were thus distinguished, they were but One God, both according to Scripture and Reason*. *Lewis Chapman*, 22d. Witness, Heard the Professor teach as his own Opinion, That the Terms *Numerical* and *Specifical*, when applied to Substances, and taken in the Sense frequently used in the Schools, ought not, or could, not be applied to the Persons of the Trinity; because the Term *Numerical*, when taken in that Sense, excluded *Three Persons*, and that of *Specifical* would infer *Three Gods*: But that this we were always to maintain, *That there must be Three Persons and One God*, in Opposition to *Sabellianism* on the one Hand, and *Tritheism* on the other; and that the Three Persons of the Trinity were the same in Substance, equal in Power and Glory, and distinguished only by their *personal Properties*: And

And heard him give no other Name or Notion of that Oneness. *Ja Stirling*, 26th Wit. Heard the Professor say, That the Three Persons in the Trinity could not be said to be of one numerical Substance, or one specifical Substance, as these Terms were used by the Aristotelian Philosophers when applied to rational Creatures, because if they were said to be of one numerical Substance, as that Term is used by these Philosophers they would be but one Person, and if they were said to be of one specifical Substance, they would be Three Gods: And that they were so one as to be Three Persons, and so Three Persons as to be but one God. *Ja. M'Alpine*, 27th W. Heard the Professor say, *That there was such an Unity in the Godhead as was consistent with the Distinction of Persons, which ought to be always maintained against the Sabellians, and that there was such a Distinction of Persons as was consistent with the Trinity, which ought to be maintained against the Arians.* And that the Professor added, That perhaps it was impossible for us while here, to know the precise Meaning of that Oneness, or Distinction of Persons, and cited that Text, *Who shall declare his Generation.*

**VI. Art.** *T*here being but one Witness, a particular Exculpation was needless.

**VII. Art.** *W*illiam Boyd, 9th Wit. Heard the Professor say, *That the Persons of the Trinity were indeed represented to us in Scripture as distinct intelligent Agents, and that they had certainly a distinct personal Agency, otherwise we behoved to say, That the Father was incarnate and suffered as well as the Son; but never heard the Professor say, That the Three Persons of the Trinity were Three distinct Beings.* 12th W. Alexander Campbell, He heard the Professor use one or other of these Two Propositions, viz. *Christus est idem ens cum Patre, tantummodo persona distinctus*; or, *Christus non est ens distinctum a Patre, sed persona distinctus.* Alexander McCulloch, 23d W. Heard the Professor say, *Christus est idem ens cum Patre, tantummodo persona distinctus.*

**VIII. Art.** *L*ewis Chapman, 22d Wit. Has heard the Professor assert, *That the naming the Father Causa Filii was a very improper Way of Speaking, and say, Pater est prior Filio paternitate, but non prior tempore.* Frederick Carmichael, 24th W. Heard the Professor remark, *That to call the Father Causa Filii was a harsh Way of Speaking; and that he has heard him, in Opposition thereto, oftner than once use these Words, Pater est prior Filio ordine & paternitate, sed non tempore.* James Stirling, 26th W. Heard the Professor affirm, *That*

That *Pater est prior Filio, non tempore sed ordine*; and, that whatever could be affirmed of the Father, ought to be, or should be affirmed of the Son.

### General EXCULPATION.

**J**ames Ritchie, 2d W. Has heard the Professor say, *That the Three Divine Persons were of one Substance, Power and Eternity*, that is, infinite, eternal, unchangeable, in their Being, Wisdom, Power, Holiness, Justice, Goodness, and other Divine Perfections; and added from Psal ii. *I will declare the Decree, Thou art my Son, this Day have I begotten thee, That the Son is as ancient as the Decree, that is, eternal.* These Things uttered betwixt the First of December 1725, and last of March 1726, when teaching Confession, Chap. 8. That the Professor asserted on the said Chapter, *That there was nothing affirmed of the Father but should be of the Son, except the Father's personal Property, which is incommunicable*: *That the Professor said, That from created Persons having each a different Substance, we could not infer, that each Divine Person behoved to have a different Substance, the Substance of created Persons being finite, and the Divine Substance immense.* In his additional Deposition, *That the Professor asserted as his own Opinion, and defended, That the Son of God was not made or created, but eternally begotten of the Father, was by Nature God, was more properly God, than the Son of any Man could be a Man, because endued with the very same Perfections wherewith God the Father is;* and proved the Son of God was not created, from John i. 3. *All Things were made by him, &c.* which proved, he said, *That the Son of God was not among the Number of Creatures, but infinitely above them, seeing every Thing that was made, was made by the Son.* And heard him refute Dr. Clark's Notion of a God, when he places it in *Spiritual Domination.* Edward Boyd, 3d Wit. *That the Professor taught the Doctrines of the 2d Chapter of the Confession, as his own Judgment, so far as he remembers, and also of Chap. 8. Par. 2. and that the Deponent was satisfied with the Explication of it, and that the Professor said nothing on the Words One Substance.* Alexander Duncan, 4th Wit. *That the Professor taught Confession, Chap. 8. Sec. 2. That the Son of God, the Second Person in the Trinity, is Very and Eternal God, &c. with the Deponent's Satisfaction.* Dougal Allan, 8th W. *That he heard the Professor teach Confession, Cap. 8th; and heard him say nothing to make him doubt it was the Professor's own Opinion.*

nion. *William Langford*, 10th W. Heard the Professor teach as his own Judgment the Doctrine of God and the *Holy Trinity*, in *Confession*, Cap. 2d. As also *Confession*, Cap. 8. particularly beginning Sect. 2d. particularly, That the Son of God, the 2d Person of the Trinity, is very God, of one Substance, and equal with the Father; and, that the Son hath Life in himself, according to that Text, *John* v. 26. and proved by the Four usual Arguments, That the Son is God, and that the Professor did not take the Word God in an improper Sense, to signify one that has *Spiritual Domination or Power*, against which Notion he warmly recommended to the Students to read the great and learned *Gassetius*, upon the Word *Elohim*. And that he heard the Professor teach, that the Son is eternally begotten of the Father; and the Deponent never heard the Professor in the least insinuate, That he was created or made. That the Professor did in general last Winter censure the *Arian Doctrines*, of which there is a full Account in *Theodore's History*, to which he referr'd; particularly the Doctrine, That there was a Time in which the Son was not, and that he is of a mutable Nature. *Charles Jervye*, 11th Wit. He heard the Professor teach *Confession*, Cap. 2d. and to his Remembrance, he did not deny, or impugn any Article of Doctrine contained therein. That he has heard the Professor say oftner than once, That the Son is very and eternal God; that the Son is possessed of all Divine Perfections: And, that he heard the Professor deny, That the Son was created or made, when refuting the *Arian Heresy*; and he heard him teach, That the Son was eternally begotten of the Father. *Alexander Campbel*, 12th Wit. Heard the Professor say, That all the Divine Perfections belonged to the Son, except the Father's personal Property, but is not positive of these Words; That he heard him say, That the Son was very and eternal God, and that *Christus est Deus natura*, in Opposition to Dr. Clark, as the Deponent thought. 14th W. *William Moncrief*, he heard the Professor teach, That all the Essential Divine Perfections were common to all the Three Persons in the Godhead, only their personal Properties were not common. 15th W. *Alexander Barr*, That he heard the Professor say, When God the Father is said to have begotten the Son, it is not to be understood as in any Part of Time, and whatever is before Time is from Eternity, tho' in the Order of Things, we consider the Father before the Son and Holy Ghost, but not in Time. See also *Page* 87. 16th Wit. *George Meek*, Heard the Professor teach as his own Opinion. That the Son is very and eternal God. 17th Wit. *Thomas Hamilton*, Heard the Professor teach, That the Son was very God, and prove it from his creating the World. 18th Wit. *David Bannantyne*, Professor taught, That all the Essential Perfections of the Father agreed to the Son, but the personal Property of the Father could not be applied

applied to the Son. *William Miller*, 19th Wit. Heard the Professor teach, That the Son of God, the Second Person of the Trinity, is very and eternal God, of one Substance, and equal with the Father; and that he has several Times heard the Professor affirm, That all the Divine Perfections belonged to the Son, as well as to the Father, only the Father's personal Property did not agree to the Son. *William McClae*, 20th Wit. Heard the Professor teach, as his own Opinion, the Doctrine of Confession, Chap. 2d. and heard him prove Christ to be the true God, and a God of infinite Perfections, on Confession, Chap. 8. from that Notion of God, with which the whole Scripture is ushered in, viz. That of being Creator; and seeing Christ is said to be the Creator in the First of John's Gospel, therefore he must be the same with that only true God spoken of by all the Writers of the Old Testament. Christ being the true God, he prov'd likewise from the Import of the original Words, *Isaiah ix. 6.* where he observed, That the Word *El*, with the adjoint Epithet *Gibbor*, could be applied to no Being but the true God, and that this was taught in the Session begun October 1725; and the Professor said the same in refuting Dr. Clark's Opinion, and that the said last Session, he heard the Professor teach, That all the Divine Perfections belonging to the Father, belonged also to the Son, but the personal Property did not: And also, that Jesus Christ is said to be the Creator, and that to create required infinite Perfection, and a Being of infinite Perfection could not be created. And further, that the Son was eternally begotten of the Father, without beginning of Time, and that the Son was the same with the Father; to prove which he used that Text in the first Epistle of John, And there are three that bear Record in Heaven, &c. the Authentickness of which Text, the Professor said was disputed by some, But he asserted it: He also heard the Professor teach, That Jesus Christ by his proper Perfections created the World, and when it is said of him in the New Testament, By whom also he made the Worlds, the Particle *sia* was not to be understood instrumentaliter. *John Anderson* 21st W. heard the Professor assert, That there was one God and Three Persons, and that these Three were one, so as to be the same in Substance, Power and Eternity. And that he heard the Professor assert, That the second Person of the Trinity was no other God from the Father, and that the Son was possessed of all Divine Perfections with the Father, his personal Property excepted. And that he has heard him assert, That the Son was eternally begotten of the Father, and was no Creature. *Lewis Chapman* 22d W. heard the Professor assert and prove, That the Son was not nor could not be said to be created or made, and that the Son must be eternally begotten without any Beginning of Time; and that the best Notion we could have of the

Son's

Son's Eternal Generation, was given us in John v. 26. For as the Father bath Life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have Life in himself. Alexander McCulloch 23d W. heard the Professor teach, That the Son of God, the Second Person of the Trinity, is very and eternal God, and prov'd that the Son is eternally begotten of the Father, without beginning of Duration; and make use of that Scripture, John v. 26. in explaining the said eternal Generation. Frederick Carmichael, 24th W. heard the Professor teach the Propositions of Confession, Chap. 2d. as his own Opinion, And recommended them as the best Form of Words he had ever met with, for expressing what the Scriptures taught us concerning the Mystery of the Trinity; and also heard him teach, as his own Opinion, on Confession, Chap. 8. that the Son of God, the Second Person of the Trinity, is very and eternal God, of one Substance and equal with the Father. And has also heard him assert and prove, That the Son of God was neither created nor made. And heard him, when upon Pitet, assert, That *Christus Filius Dei* *creaturas omnes dignitate infinite superat, cum omnes creaverit, non ut instrumentum, sed per efficaciam suæ potentie.* James Peddin 25th W. heard the Professor read and explain the Confession, Chap. 2. and does not remember that he denied or impugn'd any Article therein; that last Session he heard him teach, as his own Opinion, on Confession, Chap. 8. That the Son of God, the Second Person of the Trinity, is very and eternal God, of one Substance and equal with the Father, and that as the Deponent thought. And heard him say, That the Son of God was neither made nor created, and that the Son was eternally begotten of the Father. James Stirling 26th W. heard the Professor teach, Confession, Chap. 2. and expressed himself well satisfied with the Doctrine therein. Also heard him teach on Confession, Chap. 8. as his own Opinion, That the Son of God, the Second Person of the Trinity, is very and eternal God, of one Substance, and equal with the Father; and that the Son of God was neither created nor made: And heard him affirm and prove, That the Son of God was eternally begotten of the Father, without Beginning of Duration, and that the Son was by Nature God, and infinitely above all created Beings whatsoever. J. McAlpin, 27th Witness, That he heard the Professor teach 2d and 8th Chap. of Confession, and did not hear him dissatisfied with any Article therein, but recommended them to the Students as the best Expressions they could make Use of to express themselves on the Subject mentioned in these Chapters; That he heard the Professor assert and prove, That the Son was not created. William Coats, 28th Wit. That he heard the Professor teach on the 2d and 8th Chapters of Confession, and teach the Doctrines therein contained as his own Opinion; That he heard him refute all the Branches of the

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Arian Heresy, particularly, That the Son of God was neither created nor made, but eternally begotten of the Father, and that he was infinitely above all Creatures, as being Creator; That he heard the Professor several Times assert, That every Thing that is to be affirmed of the Father, is also to be affirmed of the Son, except the Father's personal Property. Alexander Johnston 29th W. heard the Professor confute the Arian and Sabellian Notions, with respect to the Trinity; but does not remember his Words.

## REMARKS upon the Proof adduced against Professor SIMSON.

**I**T is unnecessary to remark any Thing upon the First Article, there being nothing of Relevancy in it.

It is to be noticed, 1<sup>mo</sup>, That by comparing the Depositions of the Witnesses on this Article, both as to Probation and Exculpation together, that which it seems the Professor has said upon the first Part of the said Article, has been to this Purpose, That the Terms *Dependent* and *Independent* not being mentioned in Scripture, were not so proper or pertinent to be used with Respect to the Persons in the Trinity, or to express their personal Relations by, as Scriptural Expressions were in a Matter of pure Revelation; for that these Terms being ordinarily spoken of Creatures, were thereby rendered ambiguous and unfit to be used upon the Subject of the personal Properties of the Father and Son; but if we would use them, they behoved to be explained: And, if the Word *Independent* be taken in a Sense that includes the personal Properties of the Father, it could not be applied to the Son; but if said of him anyways consistent with the personal Properties of the Father and the Son, it would no doubt agree to him.

2<sup>do</sup>, It appears to be a Mistake in Alexander Barr, the 15th Witness, who was but a very young Student, in saying, That the Professor quarrelled the Term Necessary-existence, upon the Occasion mentioned by him in his Oath; for in this Case he is singular, and none of the other Students do concur with him therein; for Mr. Brown is not positive.

3<sup>rd</sup>, As to the last Part of the Article, "That when a Student argued, That if the Son was not Independent, he was not Necessarily-existent, and so might not have been, the Professor should have said, How do you know that?" It deserves to be noticed, That tho' Eleven Witnesses have been examined upon what passed betwixt the said Student and the Professor, yet there is not

not any Two of them that have given precisely the same Account of the Conference, but severals of them do differ very widely from one another.

4to, As to the Four Witnesses, viz. William Brown, George Meek, Alexander Barr, and Thomas Hamilton, who say most against the Professor on this Article, they do not agree in the Words that the Professor used. Brown's Words are, That the Professor said, *We know not these Things, or we know not whether he might have had a Being or not.* Meek's Words are, That the Professor answered, *That neither you nor I know any Thing about that;* and what these two Witnesses say has a very different Sense from the Words which Alexander Barr and Thomas Hamilton use, viz. That the Professor answered, *How do you or we know that?* So that these Witnesses differing so materially in their Accounts of the Professor's Words, in Answer to the Student's Objection, which is the critical Point upon which the whole of this Article depends, they thereby destroy one another's Testimony; for it is impossible, that at one and the same Instant of Time, the Professor should have used such different Words, in Answer to one and the same Objection, especially when the Words do carry so wide and different a Meaning; for the Words, *How do you know that?* Implies no more in a Debate, than the Denial or Doubting of the Objector's Consequence, and the putting it to him to make out his Consequence; which is lawful and usual in the managing of an Argument of Dispute (as this was;) whereas the Words, *We know not these Things, or, we know not whether he might have had a Being or not,* are much stronger, as carrying in them the Appearance of an express Denial, or at least a stronger Degree of Doubtfulness of the Point in Question.

5to, From the Discrepancy of all the Witnesses, in giving Account of this Dispute, which happened betwixt the Student and Professor, it is evident, that we have not the Professor's own precise Words, which he used upon that Occasion; and therefore he can never be condemn'd of Error upon any Thing that is contained in the Proof; for one can only be convicted of Error from his own Words, and to condemn the Professor upon the various and discrepant Words used by the Witnesses, and the apparently lame, different and unconnected Accounts they give of that Dialogue, would be to punish him for their Mistakes, and not for any Error that he has been really guilty of.

It may indeed be said, That it is not impossible that the Professor has used, upon that Occasion, all the different Expressions that the Witnesses have condescended on; To which it is answered, That supposing it were so, yet still it is evident, that at least we want the interjected Propositions to which those various and discrepant Words mentioned by the Witnesses, to have

have been said by the Professor, do correspond; and consequently we have not the whole in its true Connexion, without which, we can never judge, whether the Professor upon that Occasion did advance any Thing that was truly amis; for it is obvious, that we can never judge of any Discourse from *Scrapes and Parcels of Sentences, when taken out of their due and natural Order;* for at that Rate, Heresy might be found in all, or any of the most Orthodox Writings extant.

It is more than probable from the different Depositions of the Eleven Witnesses, who have deponed upon this Article, that we have not the whole Dialogue in its natural Order, and that one Witness tells what he *minds* of it, and another what he *remembers* of it; and others represent it as they took it; for severals of them are not positive as to the Expressions; which was no Wonder, considering, that above 15 Months intervened betwixt the Time that it happened and their deponing, and it is most likely, that every one of them has omitted something in their Narrative, by which the Sense must be quite altered; which is further confirmed from the Deposition of William Boyd, the 9th Witness, who seems to give the most distinct Account of this Matter, in as far as he remembered it, in these Words, "That the Professor (as the Deponent remembers) in explaining that Chapter of the Confession of Faith, concerning Religious Worship and the Sabbath Day, seemed to say something, which a certain Student thought inconsistent with the Son's Independence and Necessary-existence, who accordingly proposed to him this Difficulty or Question, Whether or not that did not derogate from the Son's Independence? The Professor answered, Just as you understand the Word Independent; and so he distinguished the Meaning of it, just as in the Professor's Letter and Answers to the Presbytery's References, which Letter and Answers the Deponent has seen and read: Depones, That the Professor said, That the Words *Dependent* and *Independent* were very *improper* and *ambiguous*, because ordinarily spoken of Creatures, and so not fit to be used with Respect to the Persons of the Trinity, or to express their personal Relations by; The Students replied, in whatever Sense we took it, if he were not *Independent*, he could not be *Necessarily-existent*. To the best of the Deponent's Remembrance, the Professor began his Answer with these Words, How do ye know that? (but is not positive;) however, in regard that these Words were only introductory to some other Things that followed in the Answer, the Deponent cannot say, That these Words, (thus standing separate from what followed) were the full and compleat Answer to the Difficulty. The Student replied, then Sir, it is possible the Son might not have been, and the Father might

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" might have been without him. The Professor spoke first some-  
" thing to this, which the Deponent has forgot ; but the last  
" Thing he spake with Relation to this, was precisely these  
" Words. But the true Answer to it is this, *that is a Philo-*  
" *sophical Nicety which we know nothing about* " ; and un-  
less these Words, which he has forgot, were produced, it is im-  
possible to know what the Professor called *Philosophical Nic-*  
*ties.*

6to, It deserves to be noticed, that the Witnesses who de-  
pone in the Professor's Exculpation, *viz. Ritchie, Boyd, Chap-*  
*man and Stirling* are the Students of the oldest standing  
in Divinity and consequently are to be presumed not only to  
have the most Knowledge, but to understand best the Professor's  
Sentiments and Ways of speaking upon these Subjects, having  
heard him more frequently upon them, than others who are of  
a later standing, as several of these are, who depone any Thing  
that seems to make against the Professor.

7mo, In this Uncertainty, which necessarily arises from the  
Proof of this Article by Witnesses, either no Judgment at  
all can be passed upon it, or if we will judge with any Degree  
of Certainty, we must have Recourse to the Professor's Letter,  
Answers, and other Papers given in to the Presbytery, which  
contain his own Account of it. It is a Privilege justly allowed  
to every Man to explain his own Words, even when it is certain  
what precise Words were used by him ; but when there is an  
absolute Uncertainty what were his Words, there it is most rea-  
sonable, and is the constant Custom, to have Recourse to his  
own Account of the Matter ; for it is much easier for him to  
recollect and set forth, with some Degree of Certainty, what he  
himself really said upon such an Occasion, than it is for any  
Bystander ; for the Professor, from his own Consciousness of his  
fixed Sentiments, and ordinary Ways of Speaking, and of what  
he then said, is a more sure and certain *Monitor* for bringing to  
his Remembrance what really passed, than the fleeting Words  
or Sounds, which transiently strike the Ears of the Bystanders  
can be to them ; especially considering that they are apt to take  
them in a Sense which is most agreeable to their own *Preconcep-*  
*tions or Notions*, which are very different, according to their  
different Degrees of Knowledge, Judgment and Solidity, arising  
from their different Tempers, Ages and Studies ; according as  
they have more or less, or for longer or shorter Time applied  
themselves, and then to put them in Words of their own, which  
they being once accustomed to, they are apt to take them for the  
Professor's.

8vo, There is the more Reason to have Recourse to the Pro-  
fessor's own Account of this Matter, That it is supported by the  
Testimony of several Witnesses that have depone upon his Ex-

culpation, *viz.* By the Depositions of *Ritchie* the 2d, *Boyd* the 9th, *Chapman* the 22d, *Stirling* the 26th, and *Alexander Johnston* the 29th Witnesses; and in all Cases the first and greatest Regard is justly shewn to the Exculpation.

9no, After all the Professor's Recollection, and hearing the Proof, it does not at all bring to his Memory that there was any Thing then spoke of Christ's *Necessary-existence*, or that it was possible he might not have been; only from what the Witnesses have deposed, he believes some such Thing has been discoursed of, only he observes, That it was agreeable to what was his Opinion, both then and now, that the Consequence of that Argument, unless the Son be Independent in the same Sense the Father is, that is, unbegotten, he cannot be Necessarily-existent, is not good.

As to the 4th Article of the Libel, That the Professor, in teaching his Students the *Chap. de Creatione*, &c.

It is to be noticed, 1mo, That there are only two Witnesses, *viz.* *Boyd*, and the young Student *Bar.*, who say, That the Professor appeared dissatisfied with *Mark's Argument against the Eternity of the World*, and gave this Reason, *Nam Christus est eternus, sed non ens necessarium, seu non-necessario existit*. For as to the other Witness, *viz.* *Duncan*, he is not positive that the Professor used these Words. And therefore,

2do, As the Professor is not conscious that ever he used such an Expression, and is certain, that it neither is nor ever was his Opinion, That *Christus non est ens necessarium, or non necessario existit*; so it is more than probable, that the Witnesses have been mistaken by thinking, that he used the Word *Christus* when he used the Word *Mundus*. For the Argument the Professor *Mark* used upon that Title was, as is set down in the Defences, Page 55. Line 15. *Mundus*.

3rd, It is the more probable, That the Witnesses have mistaken the Professor's Expression upon this Head, that it was altogether extrinsic and impertinent to the Subject he was upon, *de Creatione Mundi*, to speak of Christ, nor could it be any Refutation of the Eternity of the World to say, *Christus est eternus, sed non ens necessarium*; because of what the Professor used deliberately to teach in his Observations upon *Mark's Compendium*, as is set down in his Defences, Page 55. Line 42.

4to, That these two Witnesses have been mistaken, is further probable from this, that of the 30. Witnesses, who have been examined, none of them remember, or could positively say, That the Professor used the said Expression, except the saids two Witnesses. For it is more likely that two or three Persons might have mistaken the Professor's Expression; than that such an Expression (if it had been deliberately uttered or taught) should have escaped the Observation of all the rest of so numerous an Auditory, especially when the Professor was in Use deliberate-

liberately to teach, as his own Opinion, what is utterly inconsistent with it. Which,

5<sup>mo</sup>, Is further evident from what the Exculpatory Witnesses have declared upon this Head, in Consistency with, and Support of what the Professor himself says he taught, viz. *William Moncreif*, That he heard the Professor say, *Mark's Argument against the Eternity of the World was not conclusive against the Aristotelians*; and *Lewis Chapman* depones, he heard the Professor say, *There was an utter Disparity betwixt the Eternity of the World, and the Eternal Generation of the Son of God*, and gave this Reason, that the World must be *Finite*, whereas the Son is of infinite and unlimited Perfections. To which may be added, what the Witnesses have declared at large in the general Exculpation, concerning the Professor's Orthodox Doctrine, in Relation to the Mystery of the *Holy Trinity*, as set forth in the Scriptures, and the Confession and Catechisms of this Church.

6<sup>to</sup>, Supposing the Professor had inadvertently used the said Expression, it being neither agreeable to his Opinion, nor the Argument he was then speaking of, it ought in Justice and Charity to be construed to have been a Trip in speaking, which Kind of Trips are incident to the greatest Men, *none being infallible*.

7<sup>mo</sup>, As none can be said to be guilty of *Error*, but who pertinaciously continues to maintain and defend it, so if the Professor has been guilty in any Trip in using such an Expression, as is deponed upon, he hereby retracts it, and declares, *That it neither is, nor ever was his Opinion, That Christus non necessario existit*; and he humbly hopes, That this Venerable Assembly will never condemn him, or any Man, as teaching Error, for a single Trip in speaking, supposing he had inadvertently used the above Expression, otherwise all the Ministers of the Church of *Scotland* might be condemned on that Account.

As to the V. Article, *That the Professor in teaching gave it as his own Opinion, &c.*

As to what the Professor taught on this Head, he refers to his *Letter* and other Papers given in to the Presbytery, and to the Depositions of *Lewis Chapman* and *James Stirling*, who concur, That what the Professor taught, was, *That the Terms Numerical and Specifical, as used by the Aristotelian Philosophers, when applied to rational Creatures, could not be applied to the Persons of the Trinity, because the Term Numerical, as used by these Philosophers, excluded Three Persons, and that of Specifical would infer Three Gods, but that we must always maintain, That there are Three Persons and one God, in Opposition to Sabellianism on the one Hand, and Tritheism on the other; and the Three Persons in the Trinity are the same in*

*Substance, equal in Power and Glory, and distinguished only by their personal Properties.* But as to the Professor's giving no other Name or Notion of that *Oneness*, he refers to his *Defences*, Page 56 and 57, &c. It being sufficient, that he maintained, as *McAlpin* the 27th Witness declares he did, *That there was such an Unity in the Godhead, as was consistent with the Distinction of Persons*, which ought always to be maintained against the *Sabellians*, and that there was such a Distinction of Persons as was consistent with the Unity which ought to be maintained against the *Arians*; and *Alexander Campbell* depones, That the Professor said, That by adhering to the Account as laid down in our *Confession, Chap. 2d. Sect. 3d.* we would be on the one Hand secured from the Objections of the *Arians*, and from running into *Sabellianism* on the other.

The only Thing that's sustained relevant upon this Article, is the Professor his teaching what is therein mentioned as his own Opinion. Now, there is only one Witness, viz. *William Denniston* the 5th, that is positive that the Professor gave it *as his own Opinion*, That the Three Persons of the Trinity are not to be said to be either *numerically* or *specifically* One in Essence; and that it was such an *Oneness* as included Three Persons, and excluded Three Gods; and heard him give no other Name to the *Oneness*, nor no other Notion of it; and uttered the above Propositions in Latin.

As to the Rest of the Witnesses on this Article, there are none of them positive as to the Words they depone upon, that they are the Words (far less contain the Opinion) of the Professor.

Now as to this single Testimony of *Denniston*, 'tis to be observed, 1<sup>mo</sup>, That what he advances could not be the Professor's Words, for they are in *English*, and the Professor taught them in *Latin*, and the Witness cannot be depended upon as to the Justness of the Translation, more than his Judgment would be trusted as to the Sense and Import of what the Professor taught.

2<sup>do</sup>, 'Tis obvious wherein he has mistaken what the Professor taught, from the above concurring Testimonies of *Chapman* and *Stirling*, who declare the Professor only spoke of the Terms *Numerical* and *Specifical*, as they were used by the Aristotelian Philosophers, when applied to created Substances, or rational Creatures.

3<sup>to</sup>, *Denniston* is singular in his Testimony.

As to the VI. Article, That when the Professor asserted, *That the Three Persons, &c.*

There is only one Witness, viz. *William Boyd* the 9th, who declares the Professor said, *Whether the Subject of these Perfections be different, was another Question, and perhaps too Metaphysical for us to determine*; but as this Oath is not precisely in the Terms of the Libel, so he is only a single Witness.

As to the VII. Article, That the Professor should have taught, *That in the Trinity there were Three intelligent Beings.*

There is only one Witness who depones this, *viz. James Bain* the 7th, and *Brown* is not positive, laying, *It was Words to that Purpose*, which cannot be trusted, and it was at a different Time and Place: Besides, *Bain* was a very young Student, and only new entred, and might easily mistake *Beings* for *Agents*. Now, by the Rules of Scripture, and Laws of all Nations in all Ages, the Testimony of one Witness is no just or legal Proof against the Professor.

As to the VIII. Article, That the Professor taught, that *Deus Pater est, &c.*

There is only one Witness, *viz. James Sloos*, who Depones, *That he heard him teach, Deus Pater fuit ante Deum Filium, non tempore sed causalitate*, and also these Words, *Ni supponamus Deum non posse creare ab eterno*; but is not positive but something interveened betwixt the Two Propositions, and he took the Two Propositions to be the Professor's own Opinion. And as he is single in his Testimony, so he is very exceptio-  
nable, it being probable that he was the First that spread the *fama* against the Professor, on which Account the Professor did justly object against him: Besides, that he is neither positive nor clear in what he says, and depones upon his Opinion, which is not to be allowed to a Witness; and the Deposition, as emitted, does not make Sense, *Deus Pater fuit ante Fili-um, &c.*

And indeed, considering that when the Presbytery of Glas-  
gow had taken a full Precognition, and saw there was only this one Witness upon that Article, it is surprising they should have put it into the Libel, when they knew it could never be proven.

Upon the Whole, there is here no legal or concurring Proof against the Professor, of any one Article in the Libel, except the Fourth, wherein there is the highest Probability, that either the Two above-mentioned Witnesses have mistaken the Professor's Words, or if he has *per incuriam* uttered the Words deposited upon, it has been a Trip in Speaking, that Proposition being neither agreeable to his Opinion, nor the Argument he was speaking of.

As to the Articles of the Libel, founded upon the Professor's Letter, he refers to the *Letter* itself, his *Answers, Defences, and Representation*, which are herewith printed.



*The DEPOSITIONS in Professor SIMSON's Affair, class'd by the Presbytery of Glasgow, according to the different Articles of the LIBEL, with the Passages which concern it in the Professor's Papers.*

**A R T. I.** *HIS altering his Teaching concerning the Blessed Trinity, since October 1725.*

1. Mr. Sloss, Numb. 1. 2. Mr. Edward Boyd, N. 3. 3. Mr. Alexander Duncan, N. 4. 4. Mr. William Denniston, N. 5. 5. Mr. Charles Jersey, N. 11. 6. Mr. Alexander McCulloch, N. 24. 7. Mr. Peddin, N. 26. 8. Mr. Coats, N. 29. 9. Mr. Adam, N. 31.

**A R T. II.** *Branch 1. That formerly he used to give his Students the following Caution, &c.*

1. + Mr. Sloss, N. 1. 2. Mr. Ritchy, N. 2. 3. Mr. Duncan, N. 4. 4. Mr. Denniston, N. 5. 5. Mr. William Boyd, N. 9. 6. Mr. Peddin, N. 26. 7. Mr. McAlpin, N. 28. That he used to give it at the Polemick Conferences.

*Branch 2. That he forbore to give them the said Caution since October 1725.*

None depone that they heard him give it since that Time, about the Word *Persona*; see Mr. Barr, N. 15.

**A R T. III.**

*Nota, The Publisher would gladly have printed this Abbreviate in the First Edition of this Collection, had a Copy of it come timely to his Hands. The few Mistakes that are here taken Notice of, are by no Means imputed to any ill Design in the Committee of the Presbytery who classed the Depositions, but purely to their Oversight, considering the short Time they had for doing it.*

+ Mr. Sloss should not be here, having deponed he was not present when the Professor had Occasion to give that Caution. See his Deposition.

**ART. III.** About Independence and Necessary-existence, and the Student's Objection, and the Professor's Answer. 1. How do you know that, &c.

1. Branch. As to the Professor's Answer to the Objection in the Libel.

1. + Mr. Duncan, N. 4. Remembers only Necessary-existence in the Objection, and the Professor's Answer, That it was a Thing we know nothing about.

2. Mr. Meek, N. 16. Neither you nor I know any Thing about that.

3. Mr. Brown, N. 6. We know not these Things, or we know not whether he might have a Being or not.

4. Mr. Barr, N. 15. How do you know that?

5. Mr. Hamilton, N. 18. How do you know that? or how do we know that?

6. Mr. Langford, How do you know that? But not positive what were the very Words, but after his best Recollection these were the Words.

7. Mr. William Boyd, N. 9. The Professor said (in Answer to the Objection) as to *Independens*, as in his Letter and Answers to the References. And upon the Student's urging, if not *Independent*, then not *Necessarily-existent*, the Professor began his Answer, to the Deponent's best Remembrance, How do you know that? but is not positive. See Deposition 9.

8. \* Mr. Johnston 30th Wit. about the Son's Independence on the Father, None can suppose that.

2. Branch, That these Terms were impertinent.

1. Mr. Brown, N. 6. + 2. Mr. William Boyd, N. 9. Improper Terms. 3. Mr. Barr, N. 15. These Terms are not proper or fit to be used when speaking about the Trinity. + 4.

Mr. Hamilton, N. 18. These Terms unfit. + 5. Mr. Ritchie, N. 2. Not to be applied to the Relations of the Divine Persons. 16. Mr. McClae, N. 21. These Terms Impertinent. 7.

Mr. Chapman, N. 23. The Term *Independens*, when made use  
of

+ This Witness is not positive about Words. See his own Deposition.

\* This is only a Scrape of what he says, which alters the Meaning. See his Deposition; he is the 29th Witness.

+ The Witnesses marked + are classed here as deponing on the Terms Independence and Necessary-existence, whereas they Depone only on the Terms Dependent and Independent. See their Depositions.

of on the Subject of the personal Properties of the Father and the Son, could not be so pertinently used as Scriptural Expressions. 8. Mr. Stirling, N. 27. Dependent and Independent not in Scripture, consequently not fit on this Subject.

3. Branch, That they were Philosophical Niceties, &c.

† 1. Mr. William Boyd, N. 9. That the Professor when speaking about the Possibility that the Son should not have been, and that the Father might have been without him, that the true Answer to the Question was, *It was a Philosophical Nicety we know nothing about.*

† Mr. Hamilton, N. 18. We are not so nicely to philosophize, when speaking of the Persons in the Godhead; or, These were Philosophical Niceties.

4. Branch, Their being ambiguous Terms.

† Mr. William Boyd, N. 9. Ambiguous Terms. Compare the Passages in his Papers.

**A R T. IV.** Dissatisfied with Mark's Argument against the Creation of the World, and giving this Reason, Christus est eternus, sed non necessario existit, &c.

1. Mr. Edward Boyd, N. 3. 2. Mr. Barr, N. 15. 3. Mr. Duncan, N. 4. but not positive these are the exact Words the Professor then uttered.

**A R T. V.** The Oneness of Substance not Numerical.

1. Mr. Denniston, N. 5.

2. Mr. Langford, N. 10. Not one Numerical Essence according to Aristotle's Definition, and the Deponent not positive as to the very Words.

3. Mr. Barr, N. 15. The Three Persons not numerically one in Essence, but not positive that every one of the Words in that Article of his Deposition are the Professor's, nor can he say any of them are his own.

4. Mr. Hamilton, N. 18. Not one Numerical Essence, if the same be taken, as it is by some, and applied to one Person.

5. Mr. William Miller, N. 20. Not Numerical, as applied to Creatures; but the Orthodox made use of that Term in a Sense to which the Professor agreed.

6. Mr. Chapman, N. 23. Not one Numerical \* Essence in the Sense used in the Schools.

7. Mr. Stirling, N. 27. Not one Numerical Substance, as these Terms are used by the Aristotelians, when applied to rational Creatures.

2. No

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\* Substance in Mr. Chapman's own Deposition.

2. No other Name or Notion given of that Oneness.

II. None has appeared in the Depositions, that the Members appointed to class them can observe.

1. Mr. McClae, N. 21. The Manner of that Oneness not revealed, and it seems to be above our Capacities to conceive it.

2. Mr. McAlpine, N. 28. It is impossible, while here, to know the precise Meaning of that Oneness.

3. Whether the Subject of the Divine Perfections be different, &c.

III. 1. Mr. William Boyd, 9th Wit. Whether the Subject of the infinite Divine Perfections be different, is another Question, and perhaps too Metaphysical for us to determine.

#### 4. About Three intelligent Beings.

\* IV. 1. Mr. Brown, N. 6. 2. Mr. Bane, N. 7. In the Trinity there are Three Intelligent Beings.

*ART. VI. Deus Pater ante Deum Filium, non tempore sed causalitate — adding, Ni supponamus Deum non posse creare ab eterno.*

+ 1. Mr. Sloss, Numb. 1. 2. As to the last Part of this Article, viz. *Ni supponamus Deum non posse creare ab eterno.* Mr. Barr, N. 15. *Ens eternum est perfectissimum, interim potuit Deus dare enti durationem illimitatam, i. e. facere ut sit eternum, non tamen esset independens, cum debet semper causam agnoscere, quam causam habuit. Si Filius genitus fuit ante creationem mundi tum ab eterno — In Eternitate a parte ante non est momentum proprius creationem alio, &c.* 3. The Words in Mr. Chapman's Deposition, N. 23. About the utter Disparity between the Eternity of the World, and the eternal Generation of the Son, are not so clear that it can be so easily judged where to class them.

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ART-

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\* Mr. Brown Depones on what was said in private Conversation, and says, Or Words to that Purpose. Mr. Bane Depones on what he heard in publick teaching, and Depones only that he thinks.

+ Mr. Sloss is a single Witness here, and Mr. Barr is not rightly classed; for, if these Words of his be capable of any Meaning at all, they relate to quite another Purpose, and there is more than a Year betwixt the Times. Compare the two Depositions.

**ARTICLES of the Libel relating to his  
own Papers.**

I. Article of that Sort.

You have owned and acknowledged, that in speaking of our Lord Jesus Christ, you use not the Terms Necessary-existence, nor Independency, and gave this pretended Reason for it, that they are not mentioned concerning Christ in the Holy Scriptures, nor our Confession of Faith, or the System you teach.

— And that they are ambiguous Terms of Art.

1. The Words of his Letter, March 2. 1726, as to that Report, *Christus non est ens necessarium*, there being no Mention thereof either in the Holy Scriptures, or our *Confession of Faith*, nor in the System I teach, it never came in my Thoughts to mention it either in teaching or preaching; as little did I mention in teaching the Word *Independens*, for the same Reason.

2. Expressions in his Answers to the References, at the Close of what he has on Object. 2. to Passage 3. concerning Necessary-existence and Independency.

I am also humbly of Opinion, that I may teach and preach the whole Counsel of God revealed in his Word, concerning this sublime and important Subject, in the Words of Scripture and of our *Confession of Faith*, which are doubtless the safest and fittest, without using these ambiguous Terms of Art.

3. At the Close of his Answers in the short View of the whole. 3dly, "The Words *Necessarily-existent* and *Independent* of the Father are ambiguous Terms of Art, used in very different Meanings."

Deposition 9. Mr. William Boyd, That the Words *Dependens* and *Independens* were very ambiguous.

**ARTICLE II.** Likewise you have taught or vented, That Self-existence, Necessary-existence, Independency, Supreme Deity, and the Title of the only true God, may be taken, and were by some Authors taken in a Sense that includes the personal Property of the Father, and so not belonging to the Son, &c. And tho' you

you said, that Necessary-existence, &c. might belong to the Son, in such a Sense as included not the personal Property of the Father, yet you told not what that Sense was, but without doing so, you inculcated this Distinction as a Caution, &c.

2. Passages relating to Article II. founded on his Papers,  
1<sup>mo</sup>, Passages in his Letter pointed out in the Presbytery's References.

2<sup>do</sup>, The Passages in his Answers to these References that speak of these Terms.

3<sup>rd</sup>, In the Paragraph of his Answers to the References, immediately before the short View of the whole.

4<sup>to</sup>, The last Paragraph of the short View but one, about useful Cautions.

5<sup>th</sup>, The short View it self about all these Terms.

N. B. It has not appear'd in looking over, and classing the Depositions, that the Sense in which these Terms are owned to agree to the Son, is explained.

**ARTICLE III.** And further you used to affirm, after insisting on the foresaid Distinction with Respect to the Self-existence of the Son, that you would take it as a Piece of useful Caution or Instruction, if the Presbytery would declare the Meaning of that Term, when it is to be affirmed of the Son and Holy Ghost.

Upon Article Third.  
See the Close of his Answers to References on the first Page of his Letter.



Q 2 Main witness DEPO

DEPOSITIONS in Professor's Simson's Affair,  
classed according to the various Articles in  
the particular Grounds of Exculpation given  
in by him to the Presbytery of Glasgow,  
April 19th, 1727.

DEPOSITIONS that seem more directly to relate to Article 1st.

**A R T. I.** THAT he taught as his own Judgment the express Words of the Articles in the Confession of Faith, opposed to the Articles in the Libel, viz. Chap. 2. and Chap. 8. § 2. &c.

Branch 1. That he taught them as his own Judgment, Mr. Edward Boyd Numb. 3. Mr. Langford N. 10. Mr. Jersey N. 11. As to Chap. 8. Confess. Mr. Ritchy N. 2. Mr. Duncan N. 4. Mr. Carmichael N. 25.

2. That he did not deny or impugn any of these Articles, or express himself dissatisfied, Mr. Peddin N. 26. Mr. McAlpin N. 28.

3. That he recommended the Words in these Articles, Mr. Campbell N. 12. as to Chap. 2. Confess. as securing from Arianism and Sabellianism, Mr. Carmichael N. 25. Mr. McAlpin N. 28.

4. Several depone as to particular Expressions in these Articles.

The Three Persons so the same as to be One God, Mr. Campbell N. 12. of one Substance, Power and Eternity, Mr. Ritchy N. 2. Mr. Anderson N. 22. One Substance equal in Power and Glory, distinguished only by their personal Properties, Mr. Chapman N. 23.

The Son very and eternal God, N. 11, 12.

The Son very and eternal God of one Substance, and Equal with the Father, N. 16, 20, 24, 25, 26, 27. and N. 2.

The Son of one Substance, and Equal with the Father, Mr. Meek N. 16.

5. The Three Persons were the same in Substance, and were so One, that they might be called, The One only Living and True God, N. 13. Mr. Muirhead.

The

The Three Persons the same in Substance, and must be so, because of the Simplicity of the Divine Perfections, N. 18.  
Mr. Hamilton.

The Three Persons one Substance in Number, in a Sense used by the Orthodox, N. 20. Mr. William Miller.

**D E P O S I T I O N S** relating to Article II. of the foresaid Exculpation, viz. That in Teaching the Equality of the Son with the Father, he shewed that he had Life in himself as the Father had, i. e. That he was Infinite, Eternal and Unchangeable in his Being, Wisdom, Power, &c. and other Divine Perfections, and confirmed the Truth of all these essential Divine Perfections that are mentioned by Professor Pictet, Book II. from Chap. 2. to the End. of that Book.

1. Branch, That the Son hath Life in himself.

1. M R. Langford Numb. 10, That the Professor taught from John v. 26. That the Son hath all Life in himself.

2. Mr. Chapman N. 23. That the best Notion we can have of the Son's Eternal Generation is given us in that Text.

3. Mr. McCulloch N. 24. The Professor used that Scripture in explaining the Eternal Generation.

2. That the Son hath all Divine Perfections.

Mr. Fervey N. 11. Mr. Campbell N. 12. depones this Proposition, That all the Divine Perfections belong'd to the Son, excepting the Father's personal Property; but not positive about these very Words.

3. That all the essential Perfections of the Father agree to the Son, but not the personal Property.

This by Mr. Banantyne N. 19. Mr. William Miller N. 10. Mr. McClae N. 21.

4. That whatever could be affirmed of the Father, ought to be affirmed of the Son, except his personal Property.

This by Mr. Stirling N. 27. Mr. Cotes N. 19. Mr. Ritby N. 2.

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**D E P O S I T I O N S** relating to Article III. of the said Exculpation, viz. But ex superabundante, the Defender adds, That he offers to prove, that within the Time mentioned in the Libel, he did refute the several Branches of the Arian Heresy, namely, That the Son of God is created or made out of Nothing ; That there was a Time when he was not ; That he was a changeable and precarious Being, and the like,

**I**N Opposition to which the Defendant taught, That the Glorious Son of God was neither *created* nor *made*, but was the only begotten Son of God, *eternally* begotten of him, without any Beginning of his Duration, of one Substance with the Father, endued with the same essential infinite Perfections with him, which he has manifested by creating all Things, &c. and upholding all Things, &c. which declare him to be by *Nature* infinitely above all created, precarious and contingent Beings whatsoever, as is God the Father, &c.

1. *About refuting the Arian Heresy.*

1. Mr. Langford, Numb. 10. That the Professor censured the Arian Doctrines, referring to the Account of them in Theodoret, and particularly their Doctrine, *That there was a Time when the Son was not*; and, *That he is of a mutable Nature.*

2. Mr. Coats N. 29. That the Professor refuted all the Branches of the Arian Heresy.

3. Mr. Johnston N. 30. That the Professor confuted the Arian and Sabellian Notions about the Trinity.

2. *About the Son's not being made or created.*

Mr. Chapman N. 23. That the Professor taught that the Son was not *created* or *made*: The same Expression is deploied by Mr. Carmichael, N. 25. Mr. Peddin, N. 26. Mr. Stirling, N. 27. Mr. Coats, N. 29.

Mr. Jersey, N. 11. That the Professor said, The Son is neither *created* nor *made*, when refuting the Arian Heresy.

Mr. Ritchy, N. 17. (his second Deposition) That to prove the Son not *created*, he used an Argument from John i. 3.

Mr.

Mr. McClae, N. 21. Christ is Creator; to create requires infinite Perfections; a Being of infinite Perfection cannot be created.

Mr. Anderson, N. 22. The Son not a Creature.

Mr. McAlpine, N. 28. The Son not created.

3. *The Son eternal, and eternally begotten.*

N. 10. Mr. Langford. N. 11. Mr. Jersey. N. 17. Mr. Ritchy. N. 22. Mr. Anderson. N. 29. Mr. Coats, all depone the Son eternally begotten.

Mr. Ritchy, N. 2. The Professor proved from Psalm ii, and  
7. That the Son is as ancient as the Decree.

4. *The Son eternally begotten, without Beginning of Time.*

Mr. McClae, N. 21. Mr. Chapman, N. 23. Also Mr. McCulloch, N. 24. Mr. Stirling, N. 27. Mr. Barr, N. 15. The Son not begotten in Time. — — *Et si genitus est ante creationem mundi, genitus est ab eterno, &c.*

5. *About his not being a changeable Being.*

See *Depos.* 1. class'd under this Article, viz. Mr. Langford, N. 10. about censuring the *Arian Doctrine*, That Christ is of a mutable Nature.

6. *The Son idem essentia cum Patre.*

Mr. Moncrief, N. 14.

Mr. McClae, N. 21. The Son proved to be the same with the Father, from 1 John v. 7. That Text proved to be authentick.

Mr. Ritchy, N. 2. How there is no arguing from created Substances to the Divine; that each Person a different Substance.

See the *Depos.*

7. *Idem Ens cum Patre.*

Mr. Campbell, N. 12. The Professor said, *Christus est idem ens cum Patre, tantummodo persona distinctus*; or, *Non est ens distinctum a Patre.*

Mr. McCulloch, N. 24. *Christus est idem ens cum Patre tantummodo persona distinctus,*

8. *Deus natura.*

Mr. Campbell, N. 12. That the Professor said, Christ was *Deus natura*, and said it, as the Deponent thought, in Opposition to Dr. Clark. 2. Mr. Ritchy, N. 17. The Son God by Nature. 3. The same by Mr. Stirling, N. 27.

9. *Christ true God, and of infinite Perfections.*

Mr. McClae, N. 21. That the Professor proved this from several Scriptures, as John i. Isa. ix. 6. and said, that *EL Gibbor,*

*bor, Isa. ix. 6.* is to be applied only to the true God, and said this in refuting Dr. Clark's Opinion, in the Year 1725.

2. Mr. Chapman, N. 23. The Son is of infinite and illimitable Perfections.

10. *Infinitely above Creatures.*

Mr. Ritchy, N. 17. That the Son is not of the Number of Creatures, but infinitely above them. 2. Mr. Carmichael, *Creaturas omnes dignitate infinite superat, cum omnes creaverit, non ut instrumentum, sed per efficaciam sue potentiae.* 3. Mr. Stirling. The Son infinitely above Creatures. 4. Mr. Coats, The same, adding, as being Creator.

11. *Christ not making the World as an Instrument.*

Mr. McClae, N. 21. That Christ created the World by his proper Perfections, and that the Particle *et* is not to be understood *instrumentaliter.*

Mr. Carmichael, N. 23. *Cum omnes creaverit, non ut instrumentum, sed per efficaciam sue potentiae.*

12. *Christ is God not in an improper Sense.*

Mr. Langford, N. 10. That the Professor proved, That Christ is God by the usual Arguments, and that the Professor took not the Word GOD in an improper Sense.

2. Mr. Ritchy, N. 17. That Christ was more properly God, than the Son of any Man can be a Man, because endued with the very same Perfections wherewith God the Father is.

13. *The Professor speaking against that Notion of God, that it signifies Spiritual Domination.*

1. Mr. Langford, N. 10. Against which Notion he warmly recommended *Gussetius.*

2. Mr. Ritchy, N. 17. The Professor refuted Dr. Clark's Notion of a God, placing it in Spiritual Domination.

14. *About the Words, Pater est causa Filii, prior paternitate & ordine, non tempore.*

Mr. Chapman, N. 23. The Professor said, The naming of the Father *causa Filii*, was a very improper Way of Speaking, and said, *Pater est prior Filio paternitate, non prior tempore.*

Mr. Carmichael, N. 24. The Professor called *Pater causa Filii* a harsh Way of Speaking ; and that he has heard him oftner than once, in Opposition to that Way of Speaking, use these Words, *Pater est prior Filio ordine & paternitate, sed non tempore.*

3. Mr. Stirling, N. 27. *Prior non tempore sed ordine.*

15. *The Son's Generation incomprehensible.*

N. 30. Mr. Johnston.

16. *Dis-*

16. *Disparity between the Eternity of the World, and the eternal Generation of the Son of God.*

Mr. Chapman, N. 23. An utter Disparity between the Eternity of the World, and the eternal Generation of the Son of God ; and the Professor gave this Reason for it, That the World must be finite, whereas the Son of God is of infinite and illimitable Perfections.

17. *About Mark's Argument against the Creation of the World.*

This Session the Professor said, It was not good against the Aristotelians, 1 Mr. Edward Boyd, N. 8. 2 Mr. Moncrief, N. 14.

18. *Christ no other God from the Father.*

Mr. Anderson, N. 22.

" N. B. The Professor, in his *Defences* against the Libel, " Page 66. of his Printed *Cate*, asserts, That a little before or " after *Candlemas* last, when he came to teach the 8th *Chap.* " of our *Confession*, he prov'd, That our Lord Jesus Christ was " a Necessary Being ; and when he put Questions to the Depo- " nents for his *Excalpation*, he \* frequently asked, If they did " not hear him (*viz.* the Professor) teach the *Necessary-exist-* " ence of the Son of God ? But all of them deponed, They could " not remember they heard him teach this.

## R      REMARKS

\* The Professor asked this Question only at Three of the Wed-  
nesdays at most : But there were Twenty Students at least pre-  
sent at his Lessons last Session of the College, who were not ex-  
amined, and Seventeen of them were not cited ; who would have  
proven what the Professor asserted. This is what the Professor  
positively affirmed, when this N. B. was read in the Assembly,  
and he was not contradicted.



**R E M A R K S on Professor SIMSON's Answers, to what he calls the Presbytery of Glasgow's Paper, Intituled, References anent Professor Simson's Affair.**

1. **R E M A R K S on the Professor's Vindication of the Passage about Necessary-existence, referred to, as giving Ground to the first Two Queries, and second Part of the Third Query.**

I. **T**HE Presbytery had no Reason to understand what the Professor says in the Paragraph about *Christus non est ens necessarium*, as that he is there speaking only of Words mentioned, or expressly used in *Scripture* and *Confession*; 1. Because he would then have expressed himself otherwise, and more clearly, *viz.* As to that Report, *Christus non est ens necessarium*; there being no Mention of that Term, *ens necessarium*, either in *Scripture*, &c. it never came in my Thoughts to mention it.

2. The Passage, as now explained, does not answer the Professor's Design in his Letter: The Design of it was to vindicate him from the Imputation of denying Christ's Necessary-existence. Now the Professor could not but know that it would be no Vindication, merely to say that he did not use the Term *Ens necessarium*, for if in Teaching he used another Term or Words, but of the same Import, *viz.* *That the Son might not have been*, or that it is to be wise, above what is written, to say, *That it is impossible he should not have been*: This, without using the Words *ens necessarium*, would fully have justified the *fama*.

II. As to the Professor's arguing, *That the Prophets, Apostles, and Compilers of our Confession, did not use that Term more than he*, 'tis to be considered, 1. Tho' the Prophets, Apostles, and Compilers of our *Confession*, use not the Term *ens necessarium*, yet they teach the Doctrine of Christ's Necessary-existence; and if we should suppose them alive, and in the Professor's Circumstances, that is to say, called to vindicate themselves from a Report of denying the Doctrine, they would not think it enough to affirm, *That they used not the Term*.

It

It is easy to account for our *Confession's* not using the *Term*: For as it is not easy to use expressly all the Terms by which Truth may be expressed or denied; so when our *Confession* was compiled, there was not such Opposition made to the Truth as now, by Men professing to own Christ's *Eternity*, while they call in Question his *Necessary-existence*.

III. The Professor seems to think the above cited Passage, about *Necessary-existence*, may be farther vindicated, by observing a Distinction he uses about different Senses of that *Term*; namely, one Sense of it that is inconsistent with the *personal Properties of the Father and Son*; and another Sense, or other Senses of it, that are not inconsistent with these personal Properties; in which last Sense or Senses he owns it will agree to the Son.

But, 1. He tells not what these Senses are, that are consistent or inconsistent with these *personal Properties*; but leaves us in the Dark: And certainly dark and doubtful Ways of Speaking are the proper Grounds for Questions (as direct erroneous Assertions are Grounds, not for Questions, but Libels.) And this holds true in a special Manner of such dubious Ways of Speaking in a Paper, the whole profess'd Design of which, is a Man's vindicating himself from Imputations of Error.

2. Altho' the Professor says, That he and the Presbytery agree in owning that the Son is *Necessarily-existent*, in a Sense consistent with his being *begotten*; yet since he tells not what that Sense is, after the Presbytery's *Query* fix'd their Sense of the *Term*, the Ground of the *Query* is not removed. The Professor does not seem to say any Thing here, but what might be said by such as oppose Christ's *Necessary-existence*, in the ordinary and most proper Sense of it mentioned in the *Query*. These Men might say, they own it in any Sense consistent with the Son's being *begotten*; because they think not the Sense mentioned in the *Query* to be consistent with it: And the Professor's Words give not sufficient Security against some such low Sense of the Word, as shall import no more than a mere *hypothetical Necessity*, as when it may be said of some mere Creatures, that they must necessarily have a Being for ever, because the Immutability of God's Purposes and Promises requires it.

3. In speaking not only of *Necessary-existence*, but of the other Divine Titles mention'd in the Letter and the *Queries*, such as *Independent*, *Most High God*, &c, the Professor uses this Distinction, of a Sense in which they are, and in a Sense in which they are not applicable to the Son.

But, 1st, Has not this a Tendency to teach young Men, that in a *Sense*, the *contrary Terms* may be applied to him; that in a *Sense*, he is a *precarious or contingent Being*, or a *dependent inferior Being*; unless there is some *Medium* between

Necessarily-existent and Precarious, Independent and Dependent, Supreme and Inferior.

2dly, May not the same Distinction with equal Reason be allowed as to other Divine Titles not mentioned in the Queries, so as that Men may be taught to say, that in a certain Sense the Son is not Omnipotent, nor Omniscient, nor Eternal, &c. namely, in a certain Sense that is inconsistent with his personal Property, that Sense being still left unexplained.

3dly, It is not known that any approved Divines have used the Term *Necessary-existence*, in such a Sense, as to include the Father's personal Property, or so as to make it not agree to the Son : And if other Divines, who write not soundly on this Head, have used it so, the Professor should rather have discountenanced, and cautioned the Students against it ; and in neglecting to do so, he gives People Ground to be jealous of his own Soundness.

IV. The Professor speaks oftner than once of *Necessary-existence*, as an ambiguous Term of Art ; but the Presbytery explained their Sense of it, viz. That it is impossible that he should not have been, and the Professor will own, that their Sense of it, agrees with the Sense given of it in some of those Treatises on the *Being* and *Attributes* of God, that are most frequently in the Hands of Students : Which Treatises very justly make it a Primary *Attribute* of the *Deity*, distinguishing him from all *Beings* that are not God ; and so must fix this Principle in the Minds of attentive Readers, that a God not *Necessarily-existent* is no God.

V. When the Professor is giving the Reasons why he mentioned not Christ's *Necessary-existence*, he says, *It never came into his Thoughts to mention it, because 'tis neither mentioned in our Standards, nor in the System he teaches* ; and adds, *As little did he mention the Word Independent for the same Reason.*

But Pidet is one of the Systems whereof he teaches some Chapters, particularly *de Deo uno & Trino*, and in it there is a Chapter proving, that *Deus est ens necessario existens*, and that this is an essential Property, *Lib. II. Cap. 2.*

Also Pidet, when proving the Son to be God, does it from the Name *Jehovah* applied to him ; which Name certainly includes his being *Eternal, Necessarily-existent and Independent.*

Professor Mark in his *Medulla*, Cap. V. *de Trinitate*, Paragraph 10. says, *Quanquam genitus a Patre sit Filius, est tamen verus, supremus & independens Deus.* And Paragraph 21. he proves Christ's Divinity from the Divine *Attributes* ascribed to him, particularly *Independentia.*

So that the Professor's not mentioning *ens necessarium* or *independens* seems to be a deliberate affected Omission : And this

this makes it the more doubtful, if Christ's being *ens necessarium* be any Part of his Faith.

## II. REMARKS on the Professor's Vindication of the second Passage pointed to in the References, namely, about Self-existence.

1. **T**HE Professor says, when he took Notice to the Students, That being of *None*, is the same that many Authors understand by being *Self-existent*, he did not affirm, That the Term was rightly so used, but only related a Fact not controverted, and that the Students needed no further Caution in this Case, but to warn them of this Fact.

But on this Head it may be observed, *imo*, That if the Professor thought not the Term rightly so used, there was need of a Caution about it; and to say that there was no need of further Caution, seems to import that it is rightly so used.

*2do*, It seems strange that the Professor should say that there needs no Caution in this Case, but to warn the Students of this Fact, when he knew that there were some late Writers on the Trinity (whose Books are much read) who are very zealous for ascribing *Self-existence* to the Father only, and at the same Time would have it to be of the same Import with absolute Eternity and *Necessary-existence*. See *Clark Script. Doct. Page 246. Waterland's Def. Page 121.* And is there no Need to caution against Phrases or Assertions, that may import that Christ is not *Necessarily-existent*, or absolutely *Eternal*?

*3to*, He insinuates that the Term *Self-existent* is rightly used by those who deny it of the Son and Holy Ghost, when he wants to know from the Presbytery the true Meaning of it, when applied to them. He might easily have considered that the Presbytery's Meaning of it in that Case must have been this, that the Three Persons of the Trinity subsist in the same *Numerical, Self-existent Substance*; and that these Three Persons are the One God described, *Confes. Chap. II. Sect. 2.* who is said to have all Life in him and of himself, and to be in and unto himself sufficient; and any Insinuations against this Doctrine do not remove, but rather strengthen the Grounds of the *Query*.

## III. REMARKS on the Answers to References under the Third Query, about the Title, The Most High God.

**A**LL that the Professor offers for taking off this Ground is, First, Such a Sense of the Words of his Letter, which 'tis thought

thought none but himself could have hit upon, viz. That what he owns probable, he might have said amounts to this, The Words *Summus Deus*, when applied to the Persons of the Blessed Trinity are to be taken *cum grano salis*: But how could any other understand him thus, when he is speaking of Christ's being *Summus Deus*, according to the Title of a Chapter in *Pidet* that he had read. Besides, if his Words be taken as explained now, the Meaning will be this, that when the Term *Summus Deus* is applied to the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, (*the one true God*) it is to be taken *cum grano salis*.

In teaching the Students, he says, without giving any Caution, that Authors take it in such a Sense as to include the Father's *personal Property*, which may be reasonably construed to be his own Opinion. But it is not easy to conceive how the Title *Summus Deus* can be taken for the *personal Property* of the Father, if all the Three Persons be really God, and so infinite. If the Father be the most High with Respect to the Son, he must be a God Superior to him; for the Superlative necessarily includes the Comparative, and so the Son and Holy Ghost must be two inferior Gods, which is a Subordination with a Witness.

As to what the Professor alledges concerning Expressions used by the Ancients on this Head; seeing Men who have a sound Meaning may use unsafe and ambiguous Words, that are apt to be mistaken, and since none can affirm, that the Ancients are perfectly free from such Expressions, and they could not foresee all the bad Use might have been made of their Expressions against their own Sentiments, and seeing there is more Pains taken by Adversaries this Way, in this Age, and in *Britain*, than perhaps for many Ages by past; on all these Accounts there was the greater Reason why the Professor should caution the Students against the bad Use might be made of such Expressions, and consequently what he advances about the Ancients, is far from being sufficient to remove the Grounds of the Query.

#### IV. REMARKS on what relates to John xvii. 3.

1. **T**IS to be observed, that the Professor in his Letter, and in his Answer to the References, does not deny the Report relating to that Text, from which it was to be supposed, that his Letter was designed to vindicate him; namely, that there was a Sense, in which the Words, *The only true God*, could not be applied to the Son, but only to the Father.

2. As to the Distinction about the two Senses of the Words (*The only true God*) as well as of the other Divine Titles in the Queries: The Remarks made above may be applied to this.

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And it is plain, this has a Tendency to lead the Students to think and say, that in a Sense, *Christ is not true God.*

3. As to what the Professor alledges of some of the Ancients, the same Remarks may be made as above about the Title, *The Most High God.*

Tho' some Ancients understood the Expression, *The only true God*, in that Text, as applied emphatically to the Father; yet many of them, who were sound, understood the exclusive Particle or Term, in Opposition to Idols, and not in Opposition to the Son or Spirit of God. And others of them understood the Expression to be applied there both to the Father and the Son, so as not only not to exclude the Son, but even expressly to include him. And it is a known Observation on the Scripture Stile, that the exclusive *Terms* or *Particles* joined with Divine Titles, when applied to one of the Persons of the Godhead, are never to be understood to exclude the other Persons, but only all other Beings: As for Instance, when it is said, *That none knows the Father but the Son, none knows the Things of God but the Spirit of God, none knows the Name written on Christ's Thigh but himself.* Tho' the Father is not expressly mentioned in these Assertions, yet it is plain he is not excluded.

#### V. REMARKS on what relates to the Grounds of the Sixth Query.

**O**N this Head, the Professor owns, that when an Author says, *The Son is Dependent upon, and Subordinate to the Father*, that he does not use scriptural or suitable and safe Terms.

But whereas the Professor says likewise, That the Students might easily perceive this from the Words in his Letter; it may be answered, that from the Words in his Letter, they might as well perceive the Unsuitableness of calling the Son *Independent*, as of calling him *Dependent*; and might perceive, when *Mark* in his *Medulla* asserts the Son's *Independency*, that in that Point, he does not use suitable or safe Terms. So that this Way of teaching, guards as much against receiving Truth as against Error.

The Professor says he cautions the Students against the Errors of those who teach the Son's *Dependence* and *Subordination*, as much as our *Confession* does.

But 'tis plain, that if Errors are vented in new Expressions, not so much used when the *Confession* was compiled, 'tis not so easy to caution against the Doctrines of erroneous Writers, without ever mentioning their Terms.

It was the Professor's telling, that he never mentioned the Terms of those whose Doctrines it was needful he should have refuted, that gave Ground for the 6th *Query*. And it does not give a satisfying Answer to it, to tell, that when he was obliged to mention their Terms, instead of telling that their Doctrines were dangerous, he only affirmed, that their Terms were improper: Especially when, as was observed before, he called *the contrary Expressions*, by which the Truth is defended against them, improper likewise.

The Professor makes a Recapitulation of the Substance of what he had said in his Answer to the References, that the Presbytery may not mistake what he aims at. But 1<sup>mo</sup>, 'Tis hoped this Church will not think it safe for a Professor of Divinity, instead of vindicating the proper true Divinity of the Son, to assert or teach, That *Self-existence*, *Necessarily-existence*, *Most High God*, *The only true God*, *Independence*, are only so many different Expressions, by which the Father's being of *none*, neither *begotten* nor *proceeding*, and *begetting* the Son, either actually hath, or may be meant by some Authors, and that without giving any Caution against this Abuse of those Words; And thus to teach People to say, That in a Sense that is not to be condemned, the Son is not *Self-existent*, *Necessarily-existent*, *Independent*, the *Most High God*, the *only true God*; and to justify all this from these Words of our *Confession*, That the Father *is of none*, which is best explained by itself, *neither begotten nor proceeding*.

2<sup>dly</sup>, Whether the Professor designed, that the Presbytery should observe the Agreement of his Principles, and of what he teaches, with what Dr. Clark lays down in his *Scripture Doctrine of the Trinity*; yet it is easy to see an Harmony in many great Articles, by the following Comparison.

### Passages in the Professor's Letter and Answers to Doctor Clark's Propositions. the References.

#### *1st Passage in his Letter.*

**A**bout his Reading in *Pittet, Christus est summus Deus*, and laying this is to be taken *sum grano salis*.

Tho' I do not remember that I then used this Expression, yet I think it probable I might.

*Prop. vii.* The Father alone is in the highest, strict and proper Sense absolutely supreme over all.

*Prop. xxvii.* Concerning the Son there are other the greatest Things spoken in Scripture, and the highest Titles are ascribed

I remember I said, if the Words *summus Deus* were taken in such a Latitude, as to include the Father's personal Property; as they are by some Authors, they could not in that Sense be truly affirmed of the Son.

scribed to him, excepting only *Supremacy* and *Independency*, which to suppose communicable is an express Contradiction in Terms,

### *2d Passage of the Letter.*

As to that Report *Christus non est Enī necessarium*, there being no Mention thereof, either in the Holy Scriptures, or our Confession of Faith, nor in the System I teach, it never came in my Thoughts to mention it, either in Teaching or Preaching; as little did I mention the Word *Independent*, for the same Reason: Yet all are agreed, that if the Words *Independent* and *Necessarily-existent*, be taken in a Sense that includes the Personal Property of the Father, they cannot be applied to the Son.

*Prop. xvii.* The Son (according to the Reasoning of the primitive Fathers) derives his Being from the Father.—Not by mere Necessity of Nature (which would be in Reality *Self-existence* not *Filiation*) but by an Act of the Father's incomprehensible Power and Will.

### *Doctor Clark's Notes on Prop. xvii.*

It cannot be denied, but the Terms [Son and Beget] do most properly imply an Act of the Father's Will.

### *Prop. v.*

The Father alone is *Independent*.

### *3d Passage of the Letter.*

The Father's being of *None*, is the same that many Authors understand by being *Self-existent*.

### *Prop. v.*

The Father alone is *Self-existent*.

### *In the Answer to the References.*

I should take it as a Piece of useful Instruction, both to me and the Students, if the Presbytery would declare the true Meaning of that *English* Term of Art, when it is to be affirmed of the Person of the Son or *Holy Ghost*.

### *Prop. xii.*

The Son is not *Self-existent*

### *Prop. xix.*

The *Holy Ghost* is not *Self-existent*.

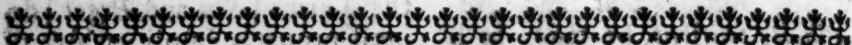
## 4th Passage of the Letter.

When that Phrase, *the only true God*, is taken in a Sense that includes the Father's Personal Property, it cannot in that Sense be applied to the Son, but only to the Father.

## Prop. ix.

The Scripture, when it mentions the one God, or the only God, always means the supreme Person of the Father.

On the Whole, there being a flagrant Report that the Professor had taught erroneous Doctrine on the Head of the Trinity, particularly that the Son is not *Self-existent, Necessarily-existent, &c.* as above, and the said Professor writing to the Presbytery for his own Vindication, has not thought fit to remove the Grounds of Suspicion, tho' the Presbytery, according to the A& of Assembly, proposed to him the Questions relative thereto, and required him to answer; and after all, the Professor shifting to give Satisfaction to the Church, as to his Faith in these Points, the Scandal must continue, and the Grounds of Suspicion must remain; and therefore it highly concerns the Church seriously to consider the Danger that arises from this, and to apply a proper Remedy.



### ANSWERS To the Remarks on Professor SIMSON's Answers to the Presbytery of Glasgow's References.

**T**HE Presbytery had sufficient Reason to understand from the Words of the Professor's Letter, that the Term *ens necessarium*, or a Necessary Being, is not *expressly* affirmed of Christ in Scripture, &c. because the common Meaning of the Word, *Mentioned*, signifies so much, *viz.* to *name* or *say a Thing expressly*. And thro' that whole *Sect.* the Professor takes it in that Meaning; wherefore altho' the other Way of expressing it had been clearer, yet the necessary Meaning of his Words in the Letter is the same; which a candid Reader, that hath no Mind to cavil, will easily perceive. And considering the Professor's Indisposition at writing that Letter, the Presbytery that knew it, should at least have put the most favourable Construction on his Words; and yet, after all, this Cavil comes out surreptitiously after his Letter had been more than a Year lying before them.

As to *Rem. 2d.* 'tis manifest from this Passage of the Letter, that he deny'd he said, *Christ was not ens necessarium* in these

these Terms ; and until he heard the Remarks read before the conjunct Meeting of the Committee and Presbytery, he never heard it so much as insinuated, that he had denied Christ's being a necessary Being, in any other Term, or Words of the same Import ; particularly not these mentioned in the Remarks : Wherefore if the Remarker or Presbytery had heard these Things, they should have acquainted him therewith before ; the neglecting of which, and delaying it until the Remarks appeared in the conjunct Meeting, appears not very Brotherly, nor shews a Concern to inform or reclaim the Professor, but rather a Design to catch an Advantage against him to his Prejudice.

As to Remark 3d, As to the Prophets, Apostles, &c. not using the Term *Ens necessarium* ; *That tho' they use not that Term, yet they teach the Doctrine.* It is answered, The Professor also has clearly taught that Doctrine, as appears from his Letter ; and he has shewed in his *Answers to the Presbytery's References*, in *Answer to Objet. 1. and 2.* against that Passage, that he teaches these very Passages of the *Confession*, from which the Presbytery infer, that Christ is a Necessary Being, and likewise has collated with it the Passage of his Letter. So that the Professor's Letter evidently contains the Doctrine, tho' he uses not the Terms. And the Holy Apostle *Paul*, in vindicating himself from Aspersions cast on him, does not think fit to make Use of the *Words which Man's Wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth*, &c. 1 Cor. ii. 13.

4thly, The Way the Remarker accounts for our *Confession's* not using this Term, 'tis only his supposing the Compilers thereof were ignorant of the Debates about the *Necessary-existence* of the Son of God, which were agitated in the ancient Church ; and several Ages since, and after the Reformation, and particularly by Mr. *Biddle* and others, whom Dr. *Owen* answers, which Errors were well known, and Disputes about them were agitated about the Time of the *Westminster Assembly*.

5thly, The next Thing remarked upon is, the giving different Senses of the Words *Necessary-existence*, which appears most needful ; that Term being taken by some Authors, when demonstrating the *Being* and *Attributes* of God against *Atheists* ; for *being of none, or receiving nothing from any other Being, or Person whatsoever* ; in which Sense it can agree only to God the Father, and in which Sense it cannot be applied to the Son, who is *eternally begotten of the Father, who gives him to have Life in himself* ; and it is appropriated only to the Father, in this Sense alone, in which, to apply it to the Son, is inconsistent with the personal Properties of the Father and Son. But this Sense of the Word being excepted, the Professor declares, that in any other Sense the Term *Necessary-existence* agrees to him, even the highest Degree of *Necessary-existence*, and *Impossibility*

bility not to have been: Which last the Presbytery gave as the proper and common Meaning of the Term *Necessarily-existent*: Tho' it be manifest, that it is equally ambiguous with the Term *Necessarily-existent*, because *Necessity* and *Impossibility* equally admit of different Meanings, according to the different Degree of *Necessity* and *Impossibility*; for in so far as any Thing is *necessary*, in so far it is alike *impossible that it should not have been*, & *e contrario*. And the Professor owns, that he does not know of any particular Words in Use for expressing the highest Degree of *Necessary-existence*, or *Impossibility not to have been*, that does not include *being of none*, except that now given: That it is the very highest Degree of *Necessity* and *Impossibility*, consistent with *being eternally begotten*, which one would think the Author of the Remarks might have understood from the Words, both of the Professor's Letter and Answers, seeing they plainly bear this Meaning; by which also the Remarker might have been satisfied, that *Necessary-existence* could not be meant in such a low Sense as *Hypothetical Necessity*, or any such *Necessity as can agree to a created, or contingent precarious Being*; the glorious Son of God, as also his proper and essential *Necessarily-existence*, being by *Nature* infinitely above them all: Seeing the Professor owns the Son of God, to be *very true and eternal God, of one Substance and equal with the Father, and not a different God, but the same God with him, Infinite, Eternal and Unchangeable in his Being, Wisdom, Power, and all other Divine Perfections that the Father hath*, which belong to the Son, and are to be ascribed to him equally with the Father; only the Father's personal Property, which is Incommunicable, cannot be affirmed of him. Whence it is manifest, that the highest Notion we can frame of *Necessary-existence*, that does not include *Being of None*, does no doubt agree to the Son, according to which the Professor believes that the Son is *Necessarily-existent*, and that it is *impossible he should not have been*.

6thly, All which equally agree to the Term *Independent*. And the Professor has shewed in the Citations subjoined to his Representations, that no less a zealous and able Defender of the Doctrine of the Holy Trinity than Dr. Owen, both in his Dispute with the Socinians, and in his *Exercitations and Comment on the Hebrews*, says, 'That the Son is *dependent* upon the Father, and *subordinate* unto him, with Respect to his *Divine Nature*'; and restricts the former to his *eternal Generation*; and the other to his *creating the World by him*. Which it is necessary to warn the Students of, that they may be able to distinguish between the sound Sense in which these Terms are applied to Christ by the Friends of the Truth, and the unsound Sense, in which they are taken by Adversaries, who take the Son of God to be a *precarious or contingent Being, or a dependent or inferior Being*, as the Remarker supposes. The Professor

for being as far from thinking or insinuating that such Things can be laid of the Son of God without *Blasphemy*, as the Remarker is. Yea, 'tis plain from his Letter and Answers, that he disapproves of these Terms being made Use of, even to express that sound Sense in which Dr. *Owen*, and other Friends to the Truth take them.

7thly, And when the Remarker says, *Unless there be some Medium between Necessarily-existent and Precarious, &c.* he seems to fall into that Error which Dr. *Waterland* calls Dr. *Clark's Leading Fallacy*, That the Son cannot be *strictly* and *essentially* God, unless he be *Self-existent* and *Unoriginate* in every Sense, 1. Def. P. 124. and of the Professor's Case P. 70. and 71. The *Arians* pretend that the Son must either be *Unbegotten*, or a *Creature*.

8thly, The Remarker asks, May not the same Distinction be allowed—*as to other Divine Titles?* Ans. Several of the Ancients, zealous Defenders of the *Trinity*, did apply the same Distinction to some other Divine Titles, as appears from their Writings, and is owned in the *Critical History of the Creed* P. 63. and other Places, which the Professor has no Occasion to mention to the Students; and by these he has mentioned, they can, by Parity of Reason, easily judge how far either ancient or modern Authors use these Terms in a sound or unsound Sense, or make a right or wrong Use of the Words; and so may be guarded against being imposed upon by the Adversaries of the Truth.

9thly, What the Remarker says about the Use of these Terms by sound or unsound Divines, needs no Answer, till he give a List of them. And from what has been already said, it appears, that the Term *Necessary-existence* is taken in more Senes than one, and that the *Presbytery's* Explication of it, is as ambiguous as it self, as I said above.

10thly, As to what the Remarker says against the Professor's Reason for not using the Term *Necessary-existence* is, That *Pictet*, *whereof he teaches some Chapters, particularly de Deo Uno & Trino, &c.* In this the Remarker uses a little of his Art. The Title of *Pictet's* 2d Book is, *de Deo Uno & Trino*, but he only treats of the Doctrine of the *Trinity* from the 13th Chap. to the End of the Book, all which Chapters the Professor teaches and explains, but does not teach the preceeding Chapters, because he teaches that Doctrine *de Deo* in *Mark* and *Conf. Chap. II. Sect. 1st. and 2d.* And the Professor proves, that the Name *Jehovah* agrees to the Son, as *Pictet* does, as he does all the Rest of *Pictet's* Doctrine contained in these Chapters. So that he as much teaches the *essential Necessary-existence* and *Independency* of the Son, as *Pictet* does; And as also Professor *Mark* does in his 5th Chap. *de Trinitate Sect. 10.* tho' he has seldom taught that *Sect.* in *Mark* these Dozen of Years, it being

ing needless to teach both the Systems on that Subject. Yet Professor *Mark* distinguishes between his *Essential Independency*, and his *Dependency on the Father*, as to the Way of his *independent Nature*, in that same *io Self.* which the *Remarker* might have remembred the Professor took Notice of to the Presbytery the 18. of January last. Whence it is evident, that the Professor's not making Use of these Terms, when teaching the Doctrine of the *Trinity*, and speaking of the *personal Properties* and *Relations* of the Divine Persons, is not a deliberate and affected Omission. And therefore whatever Doubt he and others of the Presbytery might have had about this, founded on their own Jealousy or Misapprehensions, he hopes they are now removed, and might have been removed long since, had they taken proper Methods for it.

As to the Remarks on the 2d Passage of the Professor's Letter and Answers about *Self-existence*, 'tis hoped the Professor's Answers to that Part of the Libel, Page 68, &c. will fully satisfy both the *Remarker* and others, to which he refers; only it may be worth While to notice what the *Remarker* gives as the true Meaning of the Term *Self-existent*, when 'tis to be applyed to the Person of the Son, or Holy Ghost, where he says, *Page 9.* of the Remarks, *He (the Professor) might easily have considered, that the Presbytery's Meaning of it must have been this, That the Three Persons of the Trinity subsist in the same Numerical Self-existent Substance.* Whether the following Words are also to be taken as a Part of this Description of *Self-existent* is left to the Reader to judge; but whether only the former Part, or this also makes up the true Meaning of the Term *Self-existent*, when to be applyed to the Person of the Son or Holy Ghost, the Professor could not easily consider; because he never read such a Description of that Term before in any Author. But perhaps to subsist in the same Numerical, *Self-existent* Substance, is all that the *Remarker* takes into his Description of the true Meaning of the Term *Self-existent*, which is also a new Definition to the Professor, which he is afraid few but the *Remarker* would have found out; and how far it enlightens the Matter, he leaves to others to judge.

As to the Remarks on the Answers to Reference Third, about the Title, the *most High God*, upon which he alledges none but the Professor himself would have hit upon such a Sense of the Words of his Letter; tho' by comparing the Words of the Letter and the Sense given in the Answers, 'tis obvious, that they give the plain and necessary Meaning of the Words of the Letter. But as represented by the *Remarker*, *The Words sunimus Deus, when applied to the Persons of the Blessed Trinity, are to be taken cum grano salis.* Here he stops short, and mentions not one Word of what the Professor says was his Meaning in using that Expression, *that is, Authors do*

*do not always use them precisely in the same Sense, &c. Page 25.* at the Head. By which Omission he has Room for his Remark, which otherwise had been quite lost. And it was reasonable the Professor should explain this Term after reading the Title of the Chapter, which contains the Proposition to be proved, the Terms of which were first to be explained, if needful.

2dly, He alledges the taking *summus Deus* in that Sense must be the Professor's Opinion, because he mentions that Sense of it, including the Father's *personal Property*, without giving the Students any Caution. The Meaning of which seems to be, he does not condemn the Authors that take it so. But this is no Evidence of its being his Opinion, that the Terms are rightly so used, tho' he has not so much Self-conceit, as to condemn *Justin Martyr, Ireneus, and others of the ancient Saints and Martyrs, and some of the most zealous and learned modern Defenders of the Doctrine of the Trinity, as Bishop Bull and Dr. Waterland.* And the *Remarker* may, if he pleases, propose his following Difficulty, to any that he knows do use the Term *summus Deus*, so as to include the Father's *personal Property*; but seeing the Professor does not use it in that Sense, he is not concerned with it. But the *Remarker* seems to give an Answer to it elsewhere that satisfies himself, that the Father may be called *emphatically, The most High, or only True God.* And the Professor had shewed in his Answer to the References, that this Title was applied to the Father by *Way of Eminence*; not that they thought him to be a different or higher God, *Page 25.* After which this Remark appears to be a pure Cavil.

3dly, What he says about the Ancients using unsafe Terms, while they have a sound Meaning, is but what is common to them with the Moderns. And the acquainting the Students, in what Sense the Friends of the Truth take these Terms, is very necessary to guard them against being deceived by the ill Use made of them by the Adversaries thereof. And if we must accuse and quarrel with one another as oft as we use Terms, not in the most fit and proper Sense, we must be involved in endless Strifes and Contentions about Words, which the Apostle severely condemns, 1 Tim. vi. 3, 4, 5. — *Doting about Questions and Strifes of Words, &c.* — And therefore, what the Professor advanced, both about the Ancients and Moderns, with the rest of what he says in that Part of his Answers, he thinks sufficiently removes the Ground of the *Query*, to all who construct of it with Christian Charity.

4thly, As to the *Remarks* on what relates to John xvii. 3.

1mo, 'Tis answered to the first, That the Professor only related an uncontrovred Fact; That the Title, the *only True God,* was applied to the Father in the Sense mentioned in his Let-

**Letter and Answers to the References:** In which Sense the Presbytery has not as yet said that Title can be applied to the Son.

2d<sup>o</sup>, As to the 2d, The *Remarker* referring to the *Remarks* made above, the Professor also refers to what is answered above, where it is also shewed, that this Distinction hath a Tendency quite contrary to what is alledged by the *Remarker*.

3t<sup>o</sup>, As to the 3d *Remark* about the Ancients, the Professor refers to what he has said on the Words *summus Deus* in his said Letter and Answers, and in his Answer to the Remarks on that Head, with Respect both to the Ancients and Moderns.

And as to what the *Remarker* says of the Ancients applying *emphatically* to the *Father* the Expression, *only True God*, seems to mean the very same Thing, with applying it to him *by way of Eminence*; and what follows in this *Remark* contradicts nothing the Professor has said on th's Point; he knowing no different Sentiments he has from the Author of the *Remarks*, concerning the Use of the exclusive Particles in Scripture; and which is declared in his Answers to the *References*, as far as he had Occasion to mention it, with Respect to this and the foregoing Title, *The most High God*.

As to the 5th Head of *Remarks*, as to what relates to the Grounds of the sixth *Query*, what is first blamed, seems to be " That from the Words in the Professor's Letter, the Students might as well perceive the Unsuitableness of calling the Son *Independent*, as—*Dependent*, and might perceive when *Mark*, in his *Medulla*, asserts, *The Son's Independency*, that " in that Point he does not use suitable and safe Terms."

In Answer to which 'tis to be observed, That the Professor in his Letter and Answers speaks only of using these Terms, for expressing the *personal Properties* and *Relations* of the *Father* and *Son*, for which he does not think them suitable and safe either Way. *exemp. gr.* He doth not think it a scriptural, suitable or safe Way of Speaking, to say, *That the Son of God is either dependent or independent on the Father*. Some able and zealous Defenders of the Doctrine of the *Trinity* make Use of the Term *dependent*, to express the Son's Relation to the Father by his *Eternal Generation*; but the Professor does not at present remember to have read in any of these Authors, that the Son is *independent* on his Father. And when Professor *Mark* asserts the Son's *Independency*, he evidently means it of the *essential Independency* of his Divine Nature, which is common to him with the Father; which, as said above, he distinguishes from the Way of his receiving that *independent Essence*, and his *personal Order* of Subsistence; but he nowhere, to his Observation and Remembrance, says, *Deus Filius est independens a Patre*; but in *Chap. 5. § 21.* where he ascribes to the Son the Divine Attribute *Independentia*, the only Proof he gives of it, is

is John v. 26. *As the Father bath Life in himself, so bath he given to the Son to have Life in himself.* So the Remarker's Conclusion, that this Way of teaching guards as much against Truth as Error, has no Foundation in what the Professor has said in his Letter and Answers.

2dly, As to the Remarks on what the Professor says, on his cautioning the Students as much as our Confession does, against the Errors of those who teach the Son's Dependence and Subordination, namely, *But 'tis plain that if Errors are vented in new Expressions, not so much used, &c.* Page 135. at the Foot; 'tis answered, That these Terms were used, when the Confession was compiled, by Friends of this great Truth, in a good Sense, tho' their Terms were unfit, and by Adversaries of the Truth, in a bad Sense, as they also had been long before that Time; and therefore the Professor might give sufficient Caution to the Students, without mentioning these Terms, as well as our Confession, Professor Pillet, and others do. Whence it appears manifest, that it was not so much the Professor's omitting to mention these Terms, as groundless Jealousy, that gave Occasion for their Sixth Query. And tho' he did not mention the Terms of these Adversaries of the Truth, yet he sufficiently shewed the Danger of their Doctrines, and thought it enough to tell the Terms were improper, seeing they were used by zealous Friends of the Truth; and the Professor does not think himself cloathed with sufficient Authority to stamp a Meaning on these or other Words, which all are obliged to follow under the Pain of Censure.

As to the Remarks made on the Recapitulation, it appears it was very needful the Professor should have added it, lest the Remarker should mistake what he aimed at, and mislead the Presbytery into the same Error with himself.

For his first Remark is a very gross Mistake, and what the Venerable Assembly of this Church, by hearing the Professor's Papers, and the Depositions of the Witnesses read before them, he hopes, will be satisfied is contrary to what is Fact; namely, "That for a Professor of Divinity, instead of vindicating the proper true Divinity of the Son, to assert the Meaning of this Part of the Remark, is more than an Insinuation, that the Professor does not vindicate the proper true Divinity of the Son," whereas, in all his Papers, he does in the strongest Terms, according to Scripture and our Confession, assert and maintain, *The proper true Divinity of the only begotten Son of God,* to whom all the Perfections of the Divine Nature do belong, as well as to the Father, only the Father's personal Property, which is incommunicable, cannot be affirmed of him, by whatever Words or Expressions, (whether well or ill chosen) it be done. And there are many concurring De-

positions, which prove he taught so at the Time when the *fa-*  
*ma clamosa* was injuriously raised against him.

2dly, Another Part of this Remark is, That instead of vindicating the proper true Divinity of the Son, he asserted and taught, "That Self-existence, Necessary-existence, most high God, only true God, Independence, are only so many different Expressions by which the Father's being of none, actually hath, or may be meant by some Authors." The Professor wants to be informed, where he has so asserted or taught, "That these Terms are only so many different Expressions, &c." But from the Likeness of some Words in that Part of the Professor's Answers, the Remarker is here animadverting upon, he guesses, they are taken from the last Sentence of his Answers, that precede the first Head of Recapitulation, Page 32, 33. &c. "After which there can remain no just Ground of Difference from the Passages of my Letter, mentioned in their References; they being only so many Instances of different Words or Expressions by which the Father's being of None,—either actually have been, or may be meant, by some Authors, whether the Words be used right or wrong. In which Sense alone, I say, these Words or Expressions cannot be truly affirmed of the Son." Now, if the Professor can understand the Remarker's Meaning by his Words, 'tis this, That the only Use of these Terms, Self-existence, &c. is, That they are so many different Expressions, by which the Father's being of None,—either actually hath, or may be meant by some Authors. Whereas the Professor is so far from saying so, that he only mentions them as so many Instances of Terms, by which the Father's being of none, is meant by some Authors, whether the Words be used right or wrong. Which Two Things are as different as Land and Sea. And when such a Person, as the Author of the Remarks, so widely mistakes the Professor's Meaning, of so plain a Passage of his Answers, that he had lying before him in Writing, from the 5th of January to the 14th of March last, it is obvious to conceive, how much more probably, both the Professor's Words and Meaning in his ordinary Teaching, might be mistaken by a few of the Students, that heard them but once uttered, especially when they are not called to bear Witness about them, till about Fifteen Months after they heard them.

3dly, Another Thing found Fault with is, The Professor's not giving any Caution about the Abuse of these Words, which the Professor has sufficiently answered above.

4thly, The Remarker blames the Professor for teaching People to say, That in a Sense that is not to be condemned, the Son is not Self-existent, &c. and to justify all this from these Words of our Confession, that the Father is of none. To which 'tis answered, That the Professor had so charitable an Opinion

nion of the Presbytery's Soundness in the Faith, and hearty Agreement with this Article of our *Confession*, That *being of none* is the incommunicable Property of the Father, that he was perswaded they would never condemn the Sense in which these Terms were taken, when used to signify, *being of none*, altho' they might think the Words abused. But here the *Remarker*, and the Presbytery, who have adopted his Remarks, appear to condemn the Sense, and blame the Professor for justifying all this from the Words of our Confession; *That the Father is of None*: Which the Remarker observes is best explained by it self, *neither begotten nor proceeding*; where the Remarker's Meaning is not easy to be understood. For there are only three Ways by which any Person can be said to *be of another*, viz. by being *begotten*, which is proper to the only begotten Son of God, and by *eternally proceeding*, which is the Property of the Holy Ghost; or by being *created or made*, which belongs to all created Persons and Things. This last Sense is infinitely below all the Three Divine Persons, and cannot be affirmed of any of them without Blasphemy; it had been therefore unreasonable to mention it in this Article of our Confession. Whereas it was necessary to mention the other two Ways of being of another; because the Son, tho' true God, is *of the Father*, by being *eternally begotten* of him: And the Holy Ghost, tho' also true God, is *of the Father and the Son*, by his *eternally Proceeding* from them: But the Father alone is the only Divine Person, that is *of None*, neither of these two Ways, as our Confession expressly says: And consequently, the Father is absolutely *of None* every Way imaginable. So that these Words, *neither begotten nor proceeding*, which the Confession subjoins to the Father's *being of None*, which do not limit the Sense of *Being of None*, but remove from it all imaginable Ways of being of another, plainly justify the Professor's saying, that *being of None*, without Limitation or Restriction, is the Father's *personal Property*, according to the Literal and Necessary Meaning of these Words in our Confession. Wherefore he does not see that it was to the Remarker's Purpose to say, that the Father's *being of None*, is explained by the Words added, *Neither begotten nor proceeding*, unless he thinks that these Words limit the Sense of *being of None*, and that the Son and Holy Ghost are *of None* some other Way, altho' they be not *of None*, *neither begotten nor proceeding*.

Upon the Whole, 'tis hoped this Church will not think it safe for the Interests of Truth and Peace among us, That a Professor of Divinity should be censured for teaching and maintaining the Doctrine of the *Blessed Trinity*, according to the Holy Scriptures, and the plain Meaning of the Words of our Confession of Faith.

The last Thing the Remarker is pleased to say, is, That whether the Professor designs the Presbytery should observe the Agreement of his Principles with what Dr. Clark lays down in his Scripture Doctrine on the Trinity; yet 'tis easy to see an Harmony in many great Articles, of which he subjoins a Comparison. In Answer to which it may be obvious to every Person of Knowledge and Candor, that the Remarker's Design is, to render the Professor odious, by making a Comparison, betwixt some Words pick'd out of his Letter and Answers, that do not represent the true Meaning of what he says, or sets them in a false Light, contrary to their evident Meaning, as they ly in his Papers, and then compares them with some Words of a like Sound, taken out of Dr. Clark's *Scripture Doctrine*, without noticing what is the Doctor's Meaning; And the Dr. being reputed very unsound on the Trinity, any appearing Agreement, were it but in the Sound of Words, between what the Professor says (even tho' he be telling other Folks Opinion, not his own) may create or continue Suspitions in the Minds of unthinking People, as if the Professor and Dr. Clark were of one Mind and Opinion about the Doctrine of the Trinity, in many great Articles: All which is a very unfair and unjust Way of Dealing. For what Use, pray, is Dr. Clark brought upon the Field, in this Cause, were he Ten Times more unsound upon the Doctrine of the Trinity, than the Remarker can suppose him? May he not say a great many Things that are agreeable to the Holy Scriptures, and to our *Confession of Faith*, as 'tis manifest he does? And if he should say never so many ill Things, that are contrary to the Scriptures and the Doctrine of our *Confession*, what has the Professor, or his present Cause, to do with that? Seeing the Rule, according to which he is to be judged, is not his Agreeing, or not Agreeing with Dr. Clark's Notion, but with the Holy Scriptures, the only Rule of Faith and Manners and our *Confession of Faith*, which is our Rule of Uniformity. And the Professor is humbly of Opinion, that it is not his present Business to examine what is Dr. Clark's Meaning in the Passages here set down, or to judge whether he says Right or Wrong; nor is the Doctor listed before this Venerable Assembly, to be judged by them for what he writes. Wherefore the Professor is humbly of Opinion, that these Passages of Dr. Clark's Book, here mentioned by the Remarker, are quite out of the Question that lies before the Assembly, who are not concerned to notice, whether any Thing in the Professor's Papers be agreeable to Dr. Clark's Sentiments or not; and it would take both the Assembly and Professor off their present Business. But if the Professor had nothing else to do, he could easily make a Comparison between these and other Passages of Dr. Clark's, and many Passages of the Writings of the most zealous Defenders of the Doctrine

Doctrine of the Trinity, both ancient and modern, who differ from Dr. Clark, and dispute against his Scheme upon the Trinity, between whose Expressions and his there's a much greater Affinity, than any Thing that the Professor has delivered as his own Opinion, or the Opinion of these he has mentioned as the Friends of the Truth, in his Papers now lying before the Assembly, yea a great many Passages of Holy Scripture and our Confession of Faith. I have already named *Zanchius*, Dr. *Owen*, Dr. *Calamy*, Mr. *Nelson*'s anonymous Friend against Dr. Clark, the Author of some Considerations against Dr. Clark, Dr. *Waterland*. Of which Authors he has mentioned several Passages in his preceeding Paper, which being compared with these Propositions of Dr. Clark, here cited by the *Remarker*, it will be evident there is a vastly greater Harmony betwixt them and the Words cited out of these Authors, than betwixt them and the Professor's Words. And yet after all, it would not be just in the *Remarker*, to say that they were of Dr. Clark's Mind with Respect to these Articles.

I might also adduce some Passages out of *Burkitt* on the *New Testament*, on *John* xiv. 28. and *1 Cor.* viii. 6. and out of *Charnock's Works*, Vol. 2. Edit. 1684, Pag. 252. and Continuation of *Pool's Annot.* on *1 Cor.* viii. 6. and *Phil.* ii. 6. and *John* xiv. 28. and Dr. *Tayson's Explication of the Catechism*, Part III. On the Lord's Prayer, Edit. 1680, Pag. 63. Bishop *Usher's Body of Divinity*, Edit. 1647, Pag. 80. and 88. besides Abundance of others. And such as desire to know the Harmony in Words, betwixt Dr. Clark and *Athanasius*, and other zealous Defenders of the Doctrine of the Blessed Trinity, at and after the Council of Nice, need only consider the Passages cited out of these Authors by Dr. *Waterland* and others, who write against Dr. Clark, and these cited by Bishops *Bull* and *Pearson*, long before Dr. Clark wrote on that Subject. And any who reads these ancient Authors themselves, will find more Passages in them of that Sort than any of these Authors have cited, and will also be able to see with their own Eyes how far they really differ from Dr. Clark's Sentiments, notwithstanding of the apparent Harmony of many of their Expressions.

I shall only conclude with observing the *Remarker's* unfair Representation of the Professor's Words, in this Comparison of the first Passage of the Professor's Letter about *summus Deus* being taken *cum grano salis*, &c. which is reprented in the three Paragraphs of the Comparison, without mentioning the Sense he hath given of it, both in his Letter and Answers, might lead a Person to think the Term *summus Deus* is to be ascribed to Christ in a lower Sense than it is when said of the Father. Whereas, by looking into what he has said in his foresaid Papers, 'tis manifest he says no such Thing. And he may

may also here take Notice, That it seems there was not one of the Students more than he, that remembred he then used the Expression, *cum grano salis*, otherwise had it cast up in the Precognition, that he had used it, doubtless it would have been made an Article of the Libel.

He also in the End of this first Passage, omits these Words, "But if meant of Christ's being Creator and Sovereign Governor of the World, or of the *Essential Perfections* that are common to the Father and Son, then they would truly agree to him, Page 5 and 24." Which had the Remarker added, they would have spoiled his whole Comparison. Not so much as the least Shadow of it had remained, if he had fairly represented that the Professor was not telling his own Opinion, but the Opinion of others, when he says *summus Deus* is used to signify the Father's *personal Property*; in which Sense the Professor never used it himself. He therefore refers to his Answers, Page 24. where this is expressed.

And having so fully explained his Meaning of the other three Passages here compared with Dr. Clark in his preceeding Papers, and the former Part of this, he thinks it would be a Reflection upon the Venerable Assembly, to mention any Thing of them further here; and therefore refers to the Passages of his other Papers and the preceeding Passages of this, where he has told his Mind fully about them. From which he thinks it will be evident, that the Comparison is altogether unjust, as the whole of it is quite out of the Way.

To which the Professor needs only add, That he having in his preceeding Papers said all that was sufficient to remove any Appearance of a just Ground of Suspicion of him, so far as he understood them, even beyond what either the Rules of the Gospel, or Constitutions of this Church required, through a Desire to satisfy his Reverend Brethren: He humbly thinks, they had Reason to be pleased with what he has offered. And he knows no just Grounds that either the Presbytery of Glasgow or this Church has for entertaining Jealousies of his Unsoundness as to his Faith on the Doctrine of the Trinity, nor any Reason of continuing or propagating Scandal about it; and submits the whole to the Venerable Assembly. And hopes both they and others will excuse any Escapes that may be found, either in the Language or Matter of these Answers, considering the very short Time he was allowed for drawing them up.



**R E P O R T** of the Committee appointed by the Presbytery of Glasgow, to enquire into Professor Simson's Paper given in to the Presbytery, March 29. 1727, Intituled, \* Representation to the Reverend Presbytery of Glasgow, by Mr. John Simson, Professor of Divinity in the University at Glasgow, which he owns to be a Representation of his Thoughts upon the Subject of the Presbytery's Queries approven by the Presbytery.

**T**HE Committee crave Leave humbly to represent,  
1mo, That tho' the Professor, when he offered his said Paper to the Presbytery, told them, it was a *Representation of his Thoughts upon the Subject of the Queries*; yet it appears throughout, to be rather a *Justification* of his present Way of teaching on the Doctrine of the *Blessed Trinity*, than a plain direct Answer to the *Queries* which the Presbytery had required of him, in Compliance with what was enjoined by the conjunct Meeting of the Reverend Committee and Presbytery.

2do, The Professor insists at good Length, in shewing the Danger of advancing *Hypotheses* not revealed in the Word, in explaining the Doctrine of the *Holy Trinity*, and gives an Instance of this in the *Sabellian* and *Arian* Heresies, which arose from different *Hypotheses*, made Use of to explain and answer the Difficulty of there being but *one God*, and yet *Three Divine Persons*: But the Committee are surprised to find, that these Tenets mentioned by the Professor, are called *Hypotheses*, which have always been accounted *gross Errors* and *Heresies*, directly contrary to the Word.

3rdo, The Professor acknowledges, Page 37. That in former Tears he has made Use of some different *Hypotheses*, that have been advanced by sundry *Divines* of great Esteem, which, upon Trial, he finds are not sufficient for removing Difficulties urged on all Hands by the *Adversaries* of the *Trinity*; but on the contrary, are ready to lead the *Students* into some dangerous Error: and says, That now he satisfies himself only with naming

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\* The Representation is printed in this Collection, Page 35, &c.

ing some of the most celebrated Hypotheses both ancient and modern, that have been made Use of by Authors, sound in the Faith; and that he observes the Defects and Danger of some of them, without recommending any of them as certain. from which it is plain, the Professor has altered his Way of teaching on the Doctrine of the Blessed Trinity; but yet the Committee can make no Judgment of it, seeing he neither tells what were the different Hypotheses he made Use of formerly, and now finds Fault with, nor yet what are the celebrated Hypotheses he now explains.

4to, In the Paragraph immediately following what is just now cited, the Professor, in speaking of the Oneness of the Substance, and Distinction of the Persons in the Godhead, has an Expression the Committee think needs to be qualified, to wit, *Page 37. Line 38. The Nature and Measure of which Oneness and Distinction is not revealed in the Word;* for we think, that some Things relating to the Nature and Measure of that Oneness and Distinction, are plainly revealed, to wit, That the Substance of the Three Persons in the Godhead is *One in Number*, and not *Three in Number*; and the personal Characters, to wit, *Begetting, Begotten and Proceeding*, are also plainly revealed.

5to, The two Paragraphs following seem to represent some of his Thoughts upon the Subject of the Presbytery's Queries.

But 1mo, In the Introduction he insinuates, That something in the Queries are only Hypotheses, in mentioning whereof, he propounded some Arguments to shew their Probability, and how far they may be safely used; but the Committee are of Opinion, there is nothing in their Queries, in the Nature of an Hypothesis, but that the Matter of them is plainly determined in Scripture, and in the Articles of our Confession cited in the References.

2do, Tho' the Professor seems to own as his Opinion, that the *One Substance in Number*, being *absolutely immense*, is common to all the Persons of the Trinity; *Page 38. Line 13.* yet he brings in this as an Hypothesis, and also clogs it with some Things that renders his Meaning doubtful, to wit, *consistently with the foresaid Distinction*, and adds, when that Phrase, *One Substance in Number*, is used in the Sense wherein it is ordinarily applied to rational Creatures, it will be inconsistent with the foresaid Distinction of Persons; besides the Presbytery will remember, that the Professor, in his Answer to the Libel now lying before them, has owned, that he teaches his Scholars, that the Substance is neither one *specifically*, nor one *Numerically*, in the Persons of the Godhead.

3to, Tho' he owns, *Page 38.* that what he had said in his Letters and Answers do sufficiently prove, that the Son is a *Necessary Being*, and also his *Essential Independency, Self-existence, and true Godhead, in Opposition to all false Gods, as is God*

*God the Father*, and in that Sense is, together with the Father, the *Most High God*, and *only true God*: Yet the Committee are of Opinion,

1st, That this cannot be accepted as a satisfying Answer to the *Queries*, till he explain his Meaning of the Terms, *Necessary-Being*, *Essential-independence*, and *Self-existence*, when applied to the Son. The Professor had said before in his Answers, that the Words, *Necessarily-existent* and *Independent* are ambiguous Terms of *Art* used in very different Meanings, and takes no Notice of the Presbytery's Sense of *Necessary-existence*, expressed in their *Query* on that Head; and speaking of *Self-existence*, he had said, it was taken by many Authors to signify *being of None*, or the *Personal-property* of the Father, and that he would take it as a Piece of useful Instruction to him and the Students, if the Presbytery would declare the true Meaning of that *English Term of Art*, when it is to be affirmed of the Person of the Son and Holy Ghost; Therefore it is needful, that at least he explain in what Sense he understands *Necessary-Being*, *Essential-Independency*, *Self-Existence*, when he ascribes them to the Son.

2dly, The Fourth and Fifth *Queries* are not fully answered in this *Representation*. For tho' the Professor acknowledges, That the Son, together with the Father, is the *Most High God*, and the *only true God*; yet he does not disown that the Father may be called the *Most High God*, and the *only true God*, in such a Sense as cannot be affirmed of the Son.

3dly, The Committee are sorry to find this *Representation* of the Professor's Thoughts clogg'd also with something that seems rather to darken than to clear the Matter, when he adds, Page 38. *All which I doubt not the Presbytery do with me understand of the Essential Perfections of the Divine Nature, that are common to the Divine Persons, but not as including or meant of their Personal-properties, as they are sometimes used by eminent Friends of the Truth.* Here again the Committee are at a Loss to understand clearly his Meaning; but if it be, as the References annexed to the Paper seem to import, and as he expresses himself in his first Letter concerning the Titles, *The Most High God, the only true God, Necessarily-existent and Independent*, to wit, That if these be meant of Christ's being Creator and Sovereign Governor of the World, or of the *Essential Properties* that are common to the Father and Son, or in any Sense consistent with the *Personal-properties* of the Father and Son, they will no doubt agree to the Son; but if they be taken in a Sense that includes the Father's *Personal-property*, they cannot be applied to the Son: If this, we say, be the Meaning, the Professor had not the least Reason for his undoubted Persuasion, that the Presbytery were agreed with him. For tho' it be true, That the Presbytery do not allow that the *Personal-property* of the

Father should be ascribed to the Son, yet they have openly, and upon all Occasions of going upon the Professor's first Letter, declared their Dissatisfaction with using these Titles or Terms, in a Sense including the Father's Personal-property; the native Consequence of which must be, that in a Sense, not to be condemned, the Son is not *Self-existent*, *Necessarily-existent*, *Independent*, the *Most High God*, or, the *only true God*; and therefore have concurred in a Libel against the Professor, for alledging, without giving any Caution, that these Terms may be so used. But if the Professor have another Meaning of this Passage in his Paper, it will be needful that he give it.

Upon the whole, The Committee offer it as their Opinion to the Reverend Presb<sup>y</sup>tery, that for the Reasons adduced, this Paper, as it stands, cannot be received as a satisfying Answer to the *Queries*.



## ANSWERS To the Report of the Committee of the Presbytery of Glasgow, upon Professor SIMSON's Representation, March 29, 1727.

### *ANSWER to their First Observe:*

THAT the Presbytery having objected nothing against the Professor's Way of teaching the Doctrine of the *Blessed Trinity* before he gave in his Representation to them; unless their seeming Objections against some Passages of his Letter of *March* last Year, contained in their References, ought to be esteemed Objections against his Way of teaching; it seems pretty odd for the Presbytery, so much as to insinuate he was faulty in justifying his Way of teaching, which one would think he has a Right to do till he be convicted of a Fault therein. The Representation was not designed as a plain direct Answer to their *Queries*, which the Presbytery knew the Week before he gave it in to them, and some of them declared, that such an Answer, upon the Matter of them, as the Representation contains, would satisfy them, tho' it seems they have altered their Mind since, or they are not all of the same Mind.

As to their 2d Remark, the Professor had just Ground to mention the Danger of advancing *Hypotheses* not revealed in the Word, and to take Notice of these two remarkable Instances of them in the ancient Church, concerning the *Sabelians* and *Arian Heresies*, and any Person tollerably skilled in these Matters, may be justly surprized at the Presbytery for blaming the Professor, because he calls the Tenets of the *Sabelians*

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*Sians and Arians*, which were the Foundation of their Heresy, *Hypotheses*, seeing 'tis manifest, that they were *Hypotheses* which not only had no Foundation in the Holy Scripture, but were inconsistent with, and contrary to many plain Passages of it. All *precarious Hypotheses* have no just Foundation in Scripture or Reason, some of them are harmless, some of them hurtful, and some of them heretical.

As to the 3d, altho' the Professor has altered nothing in the Doctrine of the *Trinity* in his present Way of teaching, nor of his Sentiments about it; yet he never scrupled to acknowledge, that he had oftner than once altered his Way of teaching, with Respect to the Manner and Circumstances thereof, as he judged might be most convenient for maintaining that important Truth, as he found it variously attacked by Adversaries; and there appears no Reason, why he should tell the Presbytery what different *Hypotheses* he has made use of in teaching, more than every Minister in the Presbytery should tell what different Arguments he makes use of to prove this or any other Point of Doctrine in his preaching, nor has the Presbytery any Right to know, or pass any Judgment upon these, unless he were accused of some particular Fault, in which Case, no doubt the Professor will be ready to answer according to the Rules of the Gospel, and Constitutions of this Church.

As to the 4th, the Professor says, that the *Nature and Measure of the Distinction of the Three Divine Persons, by their incommunicable Properties, Characters and Actions* is not revealed, which one would think does neither suppose nor insinuate, that the *personal Properties* of begetting, begotten and proceeding are not revealed, especially, when he says expressly, that these *Properties, Characters and Actions* are in Scripture ascribed to them; and perhaps some may think it a Discovery deserving much Applause, if the Presbytery will shew in what Place of Scripture it is plainly revealed, that the *Substance* in the Three Divine Persons is *one in Number*, and not *Three in Number*. Some famous Divines, such as *Zanchius, &c.* who were not ill acquainted with the *Bible*, are of the contrary Opinion; and neither our own, nor any other *Protestant Confession*, have said any more than that they are of *one or the same Substance*; and the *Scripture* says no more expressly, but that they are *one*.

As to the 5th, which is subdivided, the Professor might, with Respect to the first Branch, without Offence, insinuate that *some Things in the Presbytery's Queries were only Hypotheses*, in mentioning whereof, he might propound some Arguments to shew their Probability; and how far they might be safely used, such as that of *one Substance in Number*, concerning which, some Divines of great Esteem, such as *Zanchius*, have different Sentiments: And 'tis used by the *Socinians* in a very bad Sense,

as the Foundation of their maintaining there is but one Person in the Godhead; as he has shewed in his Answers to the Libel on the 5th Allegation, or rather the fourth, *said to be vented in Teaching* †, which the Professor was obliged to do by 9th Art, Assembly 1717 \*. For which Reason the Presbytery might allow the Professor humbly to differ from them, in forbearing the Use of the Term, *One Substance in Number*, although they think the Matter of their Queries plainly determined in Scripture, and in the Articles of our Confession, cited in their References, about which there appears as yet no Difference between the Presbytery and him, but only with Respect to the Expressions to be made use of upon that Subject, which are not mentioned either in Scripture or our Confession; whence it does not appear, that the Presbytery's Terms are so proper for expressing that Matter, as these made use of in Scripture or our Confession; whence it does not appear, that the Presbytery's Terms are so proper for expressing that Matter, as these made use of in Scripture and our Confession.

As to the 2d Branch. The Professor declares it is his Opinion, that the Divine Substance being absolutely immense, is common to all the Persons of the Blessed Trinity. Yet for the Reasons just now mentioned, he thinks it needful to determine the Meaning in which he understood it, so as it may not be taken in the Sabellian and Socinian Sense. And brings it in as an Hypothesis, because it is not expressly mentioned in Scripture, or our own, or any other Protestant Confession, and belongs to a Doctrine we know nothing of by the Light of Nature. Yet he thinks it agreeable both to Scripture, our own and other Confessions of the Protestant and Reformed Churches, and useful to give us some Idea, so far as our weak Capacities do reach, of the Oneness of the Godhead, consistently with the foresaid Distinction of the Divine Persons. And thinks it is much the same, whether it be called *one immense Substance in Number*, or *one undivided inseparable Essence*, that is common to them: And he is humbly of Opinion, that his Meaning is neither clogged nor rendered doubtful, by adding the Words, *Consistently with the foresaid Distinction*; by which he only means, That this immense Substance, or undivided Essence is common to them, and that its being common to them is consistent with the foresaid Distinction. And he is persuaded the Presbytery does not understand, that the said Substance is common to them inconsistently with the foresaid Distinction, tho' their Words will bear that Construction, especially when they blame him for adding that other Caution in his Paper, "When that Phrase *One Substance in Number* is used in the Sense wherein it is ordinarily applied to rational Creatures;" And

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†, Page 58; \* printed in this Collection Page 45.

And the Presbytery should have added these following Words of his, P. 38. to make the Sense clear, viz. "Or to express the Greek *"μονοστοιχος*, which was the Characteristick of the Sabellian Hereticks, as Athanasius says expressly in his *Expositio Fidei*; "it will be inconsistent with the foresaid Distinction of the Persons." Which Caution the Professor thought also needful, to guard against the said Hereticks, because the Term, *One Substance in Number*, when taken in that Sense, signifies a *Substance peculiar to a single Person*; and he hopes the Presbytery are not for understanding the Term in that Sense more than he.

The Professor owns, that he teaches his Schollars, That *the Substance is neither One Specifically nor One Numerically*; but adds, *As these Terms of Aristotle's Philosophy are commonly used among us, when applied to Creatures*, Page 56. which Words the Presbytery should also have added, to give a true Representation of his Meaning; for in this restrained Sense, *one Substance in Number*, signifies a *Substance peculiar to one single Person*.

As to the Third Branch, *Tho' he owns, that what he had said in his Letter, &c. See Page 38 and 152 last Par.* yet the Presbytery are of Opinion, 1st, That this cannot be accepted as a satisfying Answer to the Queries, till he explain his Meaning of the Terms, *Necessary-being, &c.* Answer: The Professor thinks his Meaning of the Terms in the Representation sufficiently explained by the obvious Meaning of the Terms used in the Argument taken from the Holy Scriptures and our Confession of Faith, and his calling them *Essential Perfections, or essential Independency, Necessary-existence, &c.* And the Professor humbly thinks, that it is not so very fair in the Presbytery to insist on his Explaining these Terms, seeing they have never descended to explain in what Sense they used these Terms in their Questions proposed to him, which he would have been oblig'd to have required of them, had they insisted on his giving an *express, plain and direct Answer to these Questions*; only the Author of the Remarks on the Professor's Answer's to the Presbytery's References, Page 133, gives their Meaning of the Term *Self-existent*, when apply'd to the Son and Holy Ghost, viz. *That the three Persons of the Trinity subsist in the same Numerical Self-existent Substance*; or, as the Professor observed on these Remarks, the Term *Self-existent*, signifies in this Case to *subsist in the same numerical Self-existent Substance*, where the Term defined makes a Part of the Definition; and if we put this Definition instead of the Term defined, the meaning of their third Query, *Whether is the Deity of the Son and Holy Ghost Self-existent?* will be this, *Whether does the Deity of the Son and Holy Ghost subsist in the same Numerical Self-existent Substance?* Which the Professor owns, renders that

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Query very dark to him. And if the Term *Independent* be explained in the same manner, the Mystery will encrease; and as it persuades him of the absolute Necessity of the Presbytery's explaining the Terms of their own Questions, he is humbly of Opinion, it may also convince most Part of the Members of the Venerable Assembly of the Necessity thereof.

As to the Second Branch of this Sub-division, where they alledge the 4th and 5th Queries are not fully answered, because the Professor does not disown, That the Father may be called, *The Most High God, &c.* which the Professor thinks not himself obliged to disown, for the Reasons he has given on this Subject, in his *Answers to the Remarks*; the Author of which owns, that these Titles are given emphatically to the Father, by some of the Ancients, without reprehending them for it.

As to the Third Branch of this Sub-division, they again complain of the Representation's being clogg'd with something that darkens the Matter, because he adds, *All which, I doubt not, the Presbytery understands with me, of the Essential Perfections of the Divine Nature, that are common to the Divine Persons, but not as including or meant of their Personal-properties, as they are sometimes, by eminent Friends of the Truth.* Answer. The Professor owns, that he understands these Terms in his Representation, when applied to the Son, of the Essential Perfections of the Divine Nature, &c. and not of their Personal-properties. Tho' he might be mistaken, as to his undoubted Perswasion, that the Presbytery were agreed with him therein, which he is sorry for: Yet he cannot help thinking, they do not much differ from him, when they say, *They do not allow the Personal-property of the Father should be ascribed to the Son:* But they say, *They have openly, and upon all Occasions, in going upon the Professor's first Letter, declared their Dissatisfaction with using these Terms in a Sense including the Father's Personal-property;* which the Professor thinks they have very good Right to do: Only he thinks, however dissatisfied they may be with the Authors that use these Terms so, yet they have no Reason to be angry with him, who never used them in that Sense, unless they think it a Crime, that he told the Students, *That some Authors, both ancient and modern, who were eminent Friends of the Truth, used them in that Sense,* without condemning these celebrated Authors for their Abuse of these Terms, concerning which the Professor has said enough in *Answer to the Remarks on his Answers to the Presbytery's References.*

And he is humbly of Opinion, it is a very insufficient Reason for their concurring in a Libel against him, for alledging, without giving any Caution, that these Terms may be so used; that is, as he supposes, for not condemning, as Abusers of these Terms, many of the most famous and zealous Defenders of the Christian Faith, and particularly of the Doctrine of the

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Blessed Trinity, whom he esteems in all Respects far above him, and for censuring of whom he has not the Arrogance to think himself a competent Judge. From which, he hopes, the Venerable Assembly will perceive how irrelevant and ill ground-ed these Articles of their Libel are that are taken from these Papers. All which he humbly submits to the Judgment of the Venerable Assembly.



*Two Letters from Mr. SIMSON to the Moderator of the conjunct Meeting of the Committee of Assembly and the Presbytery of Glasgow,  
March 16. and 17.*

R. S.

I Being unable thro' bodily Indisposition to wait upon you this Day, and Principal Stirling having acquainted me that the Reverend Meeting were going upon the Precognition against me; from which I think I have Reason to conclude that you are preparing Articles of a Libel to put into my Hands, according to the *Form of Process*, which Method of Procedure will be very agreeable to me: Mean Time I cannot but expect from the Justice and Christian Disposition of the Reverend and Honourable Members of the Meeting, that they will entertain no harsh Thoughts of me from any Thing laid before them in the said Precognition, or otherwise, of whatever Nature it may be, until the Libel be put in my Hand, and I have Access in due Time to be heard upon it: When I hope, thro' Divine Assistance, to give so plain and full an Account of my Soundness in the Faith upon that important Article of the Holy Trinity, as shall be satisfying to you and the Church of Scotland; which I always declared my self willing to do, and would have done long since, had such an Opportunity been given me. That the great Master of Assemblies may guide you by his Holy and Unerring Spirit to take such Measures, as may tend most to his Glory and the good of this Church, is the earnest Prayer of,

Reverend Sir,

Glasgow, March

16. 1727.

Tours,

JOHN SIMSON.

R. S.

R. S.

I Had delivered me this Morning a Minute of your Meeting of Yesternight, subscribed by your Clerk, acquainting me, that the Meeting having agreed that what the Professor has said on the Five first Queries proposed by the Presbytery, doth not remove the Ground of Suspicion, Resolved that at next Meeting these Queries be put to him, and he required to give a direct express and plain Answer to them, and appointed Mr. Simson to be acquainted hereof, and that the Meeting was to sit at Ten of the Clock this Day. I am very sorry that it pleased God to lay me under such Indisposition of Body Yesterday, by which I was utterly disabled from attending your Reverend Meeting, when you had my Answers to the Presbytery's References under your Consideration; which deprived me of Access to know what were the *Grounds of Suspicion* I had not removed, to which, if present, I am hopeful I could have given such a plain Account of my Soundness in the Faith on that important Doctrine of the ever Blessed Trinity, as might have given full Satisfaction to every candid and disinterested Person, satisfied with the Doctrine of our Confession and Catechisms, to which, as I have often formerly, so now declare my stedfast Adherence: But it pleasing our gracious God to continue his Hand still upon me, by which I am rendered unable either to speak or hear speaking, were it in my own Room, thro' the continued Indisposition of my Head and Stomach, that it is with the greatest Difficulty I am able to dite this, or hear it read over again; and I will not be answerable for every Word in it, by Reason of which it is not in my Power at present to give the Reverend Meeting the much wish'd for Satisfaction either by Word or Writ. And, I am hopeful, that, upon serious Consideration, it will not be found altogether so necessary to urge the immediate Answers to these Queries of the Presbytery, seeing the Reverend Meeting have thought fit to frame a Libel against me from what has been laid before them from the Precognition, which being uncontrovredly the regular Way of proceeding in such Cases, and being altogether on the same Subject, and what might have afforded (had there been any just Ground for it) the Occasion of the *fama clamosa*, on which you have hitherto proceeded: The answering of that Libel will also give me full Opportunity of answering all just *Grounds of Suspicion*, as I told you in my Letter of Yesterday, and therefore do hope and expect that the Reverend Meeting will accept of this my necessary Excuse at this Time, and not impute my not giving further Satisfaction to your Reverend Meeting to any Thing but Necessity; and I hope it shall be no Prejudice to the Interest of Religion, that what may be thought further necessary to be done in this Affair, be delayed till that

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Libel come to be judged upon in a regular Way. That our Gracious God may guide you and this Church in this important Affair, is the earnest Prayer of,

Glasgow, March 17.

1727.

R. S.

*Yours,*

JOHN SIMSON.

## ACT of Assembly.

*ACT anent the Method of passing Acts of Assembly, of general Concern to the Church, and for preventing of Innovations.*

Edinburgh, January 8. 1697.

THE General Assembly, taking to their Consideration, the Overture and Act, made in the last Assembly, concerning Innovations, and having heard the Report of the several Commissioners from Presbyteries, to whom the Consideration of the same was recommended, in order to its being more ripely Advised and Determined in this Assembly; And considering the frequent Practice of former Assemblies of this Church, and that it will mightily conduce to the exact Obedience of the Acts of Assemblies, that General Assemblies be very deliberate in making of the same, and that the whole Church have a previous Knowledge thereof, and their Opinion be had therein, and for preventing any sudden Alteration, or Innovation, or other Prejudice to the Church, in either Doctrine, or Worship, or Discipline, or Government thereof, now happily established; Do therefore Appoint, Enact, and Declare, That before any General Assembly of this Church shall pass any Acts, which are to be binding Rules and Constitutions to the Church, the same Acts be first proposed as Overtures to the Assembly, and being by them past as such, be remitted to the Consideration of the several Presbyteries of this Church, and their Opinions and Consent Reported by their Commissioners, to the next General Assembly following, who may then pass the same in Acts, if the more General Opinion of the Church, thus had, agree thereunto.

PLEAS

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## *PLEADING on the Relevancy of the Second and Third Articles of the Libel.*

**P**rofessor Simson was upon the 12th Day of May 1727, heard by himself and Council, being directed by the Assembly to begin with the Second and Third Articles of the Libel: Upon which Occasion the Pleadings of his Lawiers, so far as concerns the Relevancy of these Articles were in Substance, and to the Purpose, as follows.

That they appear'd with some Concern on that Occasion, as Lawiers in a Case, that might appear Foreign to their Profession, the Trial of a Professor of Divinity for Error, in his Opinions or Doctrine; and that with Relation to the most sublime Mysteries of Religion, and to the most nice and accurate Ways of speaking, concerning those Mysteries.

That yet the Circumstances of the Professor's Health, and likewise the Nature of the Trial, in which many Things, that were properly Matters of Law might occur, had determined them to give the Professor what Assistance they were able, for asserting his Innocence, in the managing of his just Defence; Hoping that if, whilst they spoke, in the free Way of Pleading, of a Subject they were so little used to discourse about, any wrong Expression should escape them, the Assembly would have the Goodness to pardon them, and allow the Professor himself to amend it.

That they were not to doubt of the Venerable Assembly's being in a right Disposition to judge of so important a Cause, joyning with a laudable Zeal for Truth, a strict Regard to Justice and Innocence, and an Observance of those judicial Methods of Procedure, which by all Laws Civil and Ecclesiastick were indispensably requisite in a fair legal Trial.

That according to these Rules, something was to be observed in general for the Defendant, before proceeding to open what he had to say upon the Relevancy of the particular Articles, to which he had been directed to plead.

That *First*, As to the Relevancy of this Libel, it was to be observ'd, That Justice does not permit that any Word or Action should be charg'd upon a Man as a Crime, unless it be the Transgression of some Law, and of a Law that is express, certain and written, such as the Party accus'd could know exactly, and so stand obliged to observe it as the Rule of his Conduct.

That accordingly, there are three Laws upon which this Libel proceeds, recited in the Major Proposition of it, viz: *First*,

*Firſt*, The Rule of Faith, contain'd in the Scriptures; and the establish'd Summaries of the Doctrine of this Church founded thereupon. *Secondly*, The 12th Act of Assembly, 1710. And, *Thirdly*, The 9th Act 1717. Against the First of which Laws a Man might sin by maintaining any Heresy or Error contrary thereto: And against the other two, by disobeying the Precepts in them exprefly contain'd: But there was something charg'd against the Professor, when the Libel proceeds to ſubfume and ſet forth the Crimes of which he is alledged to be guilty as contrary to the foreſaid Laws, which is neither contrary to any of them, nor to any other Law in Being, that could be the Foundation of a Libel. *viz.* So far as he is charg'd with *Undermining* the Truth, and teaching Things, that tend to ſhake and overturn the Belief thereof, or to inject needless and ill grounded Doubts and Scruples, in the Minds of Men, and to render them dark and uncertain as to what they ought to believe concerning the ſame: Which Things, tho' when knowingly and wilfully done, they are doubtless faulty and criminal; yet the charging them thus in a Libel appears to be irregular and captious; for that it is a Question perfectly Arbitrary in a Judge, whether a Man's Words ſhall be held to have been ſpoken with ſuch an Intention or not, ſince a Man may often innocently without Design, in diſcussing the Controversies with Adverſaries, and on a Thousand Occasions may have uttered Things, which, tho' noways erroneous, might be construed *Undermining, tending to ſhake Mens Belief, or to inject Scruples, &c.* when in Reality he himſelf had never any ſuch Intention: Whereby the moſt innocent might be overtaken and found guilty, through the Miftake or Error of his Judges. The Ma-  
ters laid in these Words of the Libel are truly Questions *magis animi quam facti*, ſuch as no Mortal can judge of with Certainty: And a Man may have an Appearance of being guilty in these Points, as well through Defect of Skill and Prudence, as of Design: And ſurely the Laws of Prudence are ſo yarious and undetermined, that no Man can be justly tried by an Indite-  
ment for the Breach of them.

*2d*, It is to be obſerved, That tho' the Libel be founded upon the Doctrine of the *Scriptures*, and of this Church contain'd in our *Confession of Faith and Catechisms*, concerning the Trinity; yet in the Sublumption there is nothing alledged to have been ſpoke or taught by the Professor, which in direct Terms is contrary to any Article of our ſaid *Confession and Catechisms*.

*3d*, The Libel, in ſo far as it is founded upon the Emission of Words in the Course of no leſs Time than two Years and a Half, without condescending upon any particular Time or Occaſion, is moſt uniform and uncertain.

But to come to the particular Articles to be presently spoke to, the First begins thus, —And Further, in teaching your Scholars you have said, that the Independence and Necessary-existence of our Lord Jesus Christ were Things we knew not. This being laid in general, without condescending upon the Occasion upon which it was said, and without mentioning the Words that went before or followed this Expression, is irrelevant: For as it stands, it cannot possibly be known whether this Expression was us'd in such a Manner as to imply any Thing Erroneous; or whether it was truly the Professor's own Opinion, or if he was telling only the Opinion of others. If what went before and followed that Expression had been mentioned in the Libel, it might possibly appear that these Words alledged uttered by the Professor; *These are Things we know not,* might relate not so much to the Necessary-existence and Independency of Christ, as to certain subtle and fallacious Arguings which the Students or others might have us'd concerning these Sacred and Mysterious Subjects: And if that had been the Case (as for ought that is laid in the Libel may have been) it is plain there could be nothing of Relevancy in it.

It is evident to any Person, that if we shall take a Scrape of a Man's Discourse by it self, and Libel him upon it, without Regard to the Connection of his Discourse, and what proceeds and follows; it will be easy to find any Man guilty of Error or Blasphemy when he is making the most sound and Orthodox Discourse; especially if one shall be libelled upon such Scraps of Words emitted above Fifteen or Eighteen Months before he is accused, when it is, by the Nature of the Thing, impossible to recollect or make appear the whole Tenor and Series of the Discourse. And therefore this Part of the Article is absolutely irrelevant.

The Libel goes on, That these Terms (viz. Independence and Necessary-existence) were impertinent, and not to be used in talking of the Trinity. It would be absurd to understand these Words, Talking of the Trinity, of the Relation betwixt any one Person of the Trinity and Creatures; for that in no proper Sense could be called, Talking of the Trinity, and would imply an Assertion that they were impertinent in speaking of the Relation betwixt God the Father and Creatures, which it would be absurd to suppose that even an Arian would affirm; and therefore the Meaning of the Article can only be this, That the Professor should have said these Terms were impertinent or not pertinent to express the personal Relations of the Trinity by: But this is noways relevant; for, *imo*, It is evident that these are not the Scripture-Terms, by which the personal Relations of the Trinity are expressed: And in a Matter of pure Revelation it is certain, that no Words are so fit to be used as the Words that the Holy Ghost has thought fit

fit to pitch upon. 2d<sup>o</sup>, The Terms *Independent* and *Dependent*, being only used to express the Relation betwixt God and Creatures, is thereby rendered unfit to be used in expressing the personal Relations betwixt the Father and the Son, which our Confession expresses thus, That the Father is *of None*, neither *begotten*, &c. and the Son is *begotten*; and to substitute in place of these Expressions the other Terms, viz. To say that the Father is *Independent*, and the Son is *Dependent*, for *begotten*, seems shocking, and is apt to lead into Mistakes: And therefore the saying that these Terms were *impertinent*, and not to be used with respect to the *Trinity*, in respect of their personal Relations, is so far from being wrong, that it is sound Doctrine: And the same is true of the Term *Necessary-existence*, when taken (as it is by some) for *being of None*, or for *unbegotten*.

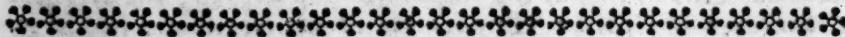
It follows in the Libel, and that they were *Philosophical Niceties and ambiguous Terms of Art*. This is likewise irrelevant, seeing what went before and followed is not mentioned: For that might be justly said of the subtle Reasonings, That the Students might have used when discoursing of this sacred Mystery, or it might have been said of the Arguments used by Adversaries of the Truth: And it is evident, that if these Terms of Art were used in talking of the *Trinity*, they could not be taken in the common Acceptation, and so would be rendered ambiguous, and apt to mislead.

It follows in the Libel, When your Students argued, that if the Son was not Independent, he was not Necessarily-existent, and so might not have been, and the Father might possibly have been without him. You answered, How do you know, or how do we know that. This Article is not relevant, for the Words alledged said by the Professor, How do you know that, can import no more in a Dispute (as this is said to have been) than a denying of the Consequences of the Students arguing, which is so far from being Criminal, that it serves to exculpate the Professor from the Imputation of denying the *Necessary-existence* of Christ: For the Students Argument seems to be thus, If the Son be not absolutely *Independent* of the Father, that is *unbegotten*, then he cannot be *Necessarily-existent*: The Professor answers, How do you know that, that is, how make you out that Consequence, as if he had said, I deny the Consequence, for it is very consistent, that the Son may be *Necessarily-existent*, and yet may be *Dependent*, if by that Term you mean *begotten of the Father*, so that this is so far from implying a Denial of Christ's *Necessary-existence*, that it is an asserting it in the strongest Manner; and therefore this Article, as it is laid, is not relevant.

As to the next Article in the Libel, And yet further in teaching your Students the Chap. de Creatione, &c. it is like wise defective,

fective, seeing it does not mention the *whole* Words alledged to have been used by the Professor: For without a Knowledge of the *whole* in its full Order and Connection, we can never know whether the Professor vented it as his own Opinion, or the Opinion of others.

But further it is to be noticed, That 'tis not here charged against the Professor, that he expressly denied the *Necessary-existence* of Christ, but that is endeavoured to be inferred from this Article of the Libel; and yet, supposing what's libelled to have been true, this Article, taking it as it lies, does not necessarily infer a Denial of the *Necessary-existence* of Christ, taking it as an Essential Perfection of the Deity in the ordinary Meaning of the Word, *viz.* That it is impossible for him not to be. For if the Professor had said, that the Argument against the Eternity of the World, *viz.* That if *Eternal*, it must be *Necessarily-existent*, was not good, because *Christus est eternus, sed non ens necessarium*, there the Meaning of *non est ens necessarium*, may and certainly can be no other than that *he is not unoriginate or unbegotten*. For the *Aristotelians* allow, that the World was created, at the same Time that they say it was *Eternal*; and *Markius* denies the Consistency of these two, saying that the World cannot be *Eternal*, unless it be *Necessarily-existent*: Meaning thereby *unoriginated*. Which Argument of *Mark's*, if the Professor objected against, from the Example of Christ who is *Eternal*, and yet not *unoriginated*, whether he argued well or ill, 'tis plain that it is not a Denial of his Essential *Necessary-existence*, meaning thereby that it was impossible for him not to have been; and consequently this Article of the Libel is not relevant to infir that for which it is adduced, *viz.* That the Professor denied the *Necessary-existence* of Christ, as it is an Essential Perfection of the Deity, which belongs equally to all the Three Divine Persons of the Trinity,



### *A PAPER containing Reasons against the Relevancy of the second and third Articles of the Libel, given in judicially by Professor SIMSON to the Assembly; May 15. 1727.*

**T**HE first Proposition in Article 2d, *That the Independence and Necessary-existence of our Lord Jesus Christ, were Things we knew not*, is not relevant.

1. Because these Terms are neither used in *Scripture* nor in our *Confession of Faith*: And therefore a Minister's saying, *He knows not these Terms*, or what Doctrines mentioned in *Scripture* or our *Confession of Faith*, are signified by these Terms, is the Transgression of no standing Rule of this Church, supposing the Professor had said what is libelled, which is not granted.

2. The Assembly's judging this Proposition relevant to infer Censure, would make the Use of these Words a *Necessary Term of Ministerial Communion*, and thereby establish a new Article of *Faith*, or at least make these Terms necessary for expressing some Article of *Faith*, which would evidently alter our *Rule of Uniformity*.

3. Supposing the Assembly should do so, yet it could not justly have a Retrospect, or be found relevant against the Professor; because the Use of these Terms, in expressing any Article of *Faith*, were none of the *Terms of Communion*, which he either did or was obliged to engage to at his Admission.

4. This Way of bringing in *new Articles of Faith*, or new Ways of expressing the old ones, by a judicial Act of sustaining a Relevancy, is contrary to the establish'd Rule of this Church, in the Overture and Act anent Novations, *Act 11. 1695*, and *Act 9. 1697*, which are craved to be read, and *Act 12. 1710*, which forbids the Use of new Expressions, as cited in the Preamble of the Libel: Whence the Professor concludes, that this Proposition, as laid in the Libel, cannot be relevant. (See Page 161 and 44.)

For which Reasons, also the second Proposition, that *these Terms were impertinent, and not to be used in talking of the Trinity*, cannot be relevant, it being exactly agreeable to the said *Act 1710*.

And for the same Reasons, the third Proposition, viz. That *they were Philosophical Niceties we know nothing about, and are ambiguous Terms of Art*, is not relevant, it being manifest that they are used in different Senses, and therefore *ambiguous*, as is acknowledged in the Remarks on the Professor's Answers to the Presbytery's References, where *Necessary-existence* is taken for a *Hypothetical Necessity of Existence competent to Creatures*.

It is therefore a Breach of no standing Rule, to call some Use of these Terms *Philosophical Niceties*, or to say *we know not what particular Truths relating to that important Doctrine of the Trinity are signified by them*; they being neither used in *Scripture* nor our *Confession*, to express any Part of that Doctrine, and being used by Authors in a Meaning that can't agree to it.

And as to the last Part of this Article, the Answer to that Objection, *If the Son was not Independent, he was not Necessarily-existent, &c. How do you or we know that?* This can-

cannot be relevant, because it asserts nothing, and the plain Import of it in a Dispute, is to put the Objector to prove his Consequence.

For the same Reasons mentioned in the first Proposition of the second Article, It is pleaded that the third Article, *Christus non est ens necessarium*, is not relevant, as here laid, tho' it were true the Professor had said it, which he is confident he did not, it being contrary to his Opinion, and impertinent to the Purpose he was upon, as laid in the Libel.

Wherefore, altho' the Professor in a Compliance with his Brethren's Desire, and that he might remove their Jealousies and Suspicions about his Soundnes on this important Point of Doctrine, shewed in what Sense these Terms might be safely used, and did express the Truth, when applied to the Persons of the Trinity, which he hopes will satisfy all that have not a Mind to cavil. Yet it is a quite other Use, when the Question is about the finding of an Article of a Libel relevant to infer a Censure with Respect to these Terms: And therefore, tho' he adheres to his former Declarations of the *Essential Independence and Necessary-existence of the Son of God*, yet he pleads that these Articles as laid in the Libel, cannot, for the Reasons alledged, be found relevant against him, according to the Rules and Constitutions of this Church.

And that the Doctrine of the *Trinity* is sufficiently guarded against the Errors, for opposing which the Terms in the Libel are by some thought needful, by the Expressions used in our *Confession of Faith and Catechisms*, is plain from this, that none of the Maintainers of these Errors will sign our *Confession of Faith*.

## PLEADING upon the Relevancy of the Exculpation.

THE Assembly having found a Relevancy in the Second and Third Articles of the Libel, after resolving it into Four Propositions which they judged to be contained therein, they proceeded May 15<sup>th</sup> to consider the Professor's Exculpation, or Defences, and called upon him and his Council to point out and sum up the same, upon which Occasion the Pleadings were to the following Purpose.

That the Professor's Defences were very distinctly stated to the Presbytery of Glasgow in writing, and were contained in Pages 71, 72, 73, 74 of the printed Case, viz.— “ That in Regard the Libel is founded, in a great Measure, upon ” the

" the Emission of Words alledged to have been uttered at a great  
 " Distance of Time, without condescending upon the parti-  
 " cular Occasion, Subject or full Connexion of the Discourse  
 " upon which they were so emitted ; and that the particular  
 " Expressions, and the Connexion of them may easily have escap-  
 " ed the Memory of the Witnesses : That therefore he may  
 " be allowed a conjunct Proof or a preferable Proof, for Ex-  
 " cution, upon every Allegation contain'd in the Libel  
 " which relates to his Expressions uttered in teaching or speak-  
 " ing ; that thereby the whole Strain and Import of such Ex-  
 " pressions may fully appear, which is the only Rule by which  
 " the Defendant's Sentiments can be measured or judged.  
 " And when that is allowed him, he offers to prove that any  
 " Expressions contain'd in the Libel that were deliberately ut-  
 " tered by him, which, separately taken, might appear unsafe  
 " or impertinent, will, when the whole Strain of his Discourse  
 " at the Time is considered, appear safe, blameless, and a-  
 " greeable to the Holy Scriptures, our Confession of Faith and  
 " Catechisms."

That the First of these Defences was most Relevant to elide the whole Libel, and every Article of it, and such as the Defendants believe would in no Court upon Earth (excepting one Foreign Tribunal) be refused to be admitted. That this Defence was laid as particularly and distinctly as was possible, or was requisite to make it Relevant: For it could not be expected that the Professor should in his Defences, set forth the whole Strain or Particulars of his Discourse, at the several Times when he is said to have uttered the Expressions libelled, when he is not conscious to himself, nor remembers that he ever uttered any such Expressions : And when the Libel it self does not lay the several Expressions specially, as to the Circumstances or Time of uttering them, but says in general, that at Some-time or Occasion, within the Space of two Years and a Half, such Words or Phrases had been used by him.

That neither could this be repelled as being *contrary to the Libel*, because it has not even the Appearance of that, excepting as to the Third Article, which specially sets forth the Occasion of uttering the Words therein libelled. And yet these also might very possibly be explained by what preceeded or followed in the Lecture, so as would show the Professor could not mean or intend to vent the Error, when he uttered these Words, which at first View they seem to import, and that the Rule it self of repelling Defences that are contrary to the Libel, deserves not to be regarded in a Case of this Kind. For that even in criminal Trials for plain ouvert Facts, Lawiers themselves are not agreed about it. And an eminent Lawier says, " That it seems not to be allowable, because all Defences of Exculpa-  
 " tion might be thereby precluded, the Pursuer, of Design,

" so laying his Libel, as to make it contrary to the only Ex-  
" cution he apprehended. And that even the Defences of  
" *alibi*, which is good against every Crime, or of Self-defence,  
" or casual Homicide, which are relevant against an Indite-  
" ment for Murder, are contrary to the Libels, which always  
" bear the Person accus'd to have committed the Crime at a  
" certain Place libelled, and to have committed the Murder  
" with Premeditation and Fore-thought Fellony. Yet to re-  
" pell these Defences would be absurd."

These and many other Reasons for the Limitation of that Rule of repelling Defences contray to the Libel, shew that it cannot be regarded in this Case of an Ecclesiastical Trial for erroneous Opinions, vented *in speaking*, and where the Defence offered is not truly contrary to the Libel; for it is not that the Professor did not utter such Words as are libelled, but that the other Words spoke by him at the same Time would explain the Words libelled, if they shall be proven, so as to show him innocent of intending any Error by them.

That yet this Defence so relevant, against the whole Libel, and whereof the Professor craved to be allowed a Proof, the Presbytery had refused to admit as relevant, or to allow him any Proof of it: And yet it seem'd to be impossible that he should be condemned for Error, tho' every Article in the Libel were relevant and proven, whilst such a Defence as this stood proposed for him, and no Proof allowed him of it.

That it did nowise appear, that this Defence had been waved or passed from by the Professor, and that the Presbytery of *Glasgow* were at least greatly mistaken, in supposing that he had, as is evident from their own Minutes, which gives this Account of the Matter. That upon the 19th of *April*, when the Presbytery were about to proceed to consider the Professor's Exculpation above-mentioned, as laid in his Answers, they called him in, and asked, if he had any Thing more special to offer on his Exculpation; He answered, He had something to *ADD*, which he promised to do in Writing against the Afternoon, and the Presbytery allowed him to do so. That accordingly in the Afternoon, the Professor gave in a Paper, Intituled, *Particular Grounds of Exculpation*, &c. and then withdrew. It is here added in the Minute (*and insisted not in any other Exculpation*) which are the Words, not of the Professor, but of the Presbytery or their Clerk; and can with Truth bear no other Meaning than this, That when that Paper was presented in the Afternoon by the Professor, he did not expressly repeate or declare, that by offering that, he did not withdraw or pass from the other Points of Exculpation, contained in his Answers to the Libel. And the Question is, Whether that Omission of his could reasonably be construed by the Presbytery to be a passing from all

Defence, other than that additional Paper contained? And it seems evident that it could not be so construed, but that on the contrary nothing less could amount to that, than an express, judicial Declaration, by Word or in Writing of the Professor himself, that he withdrew such Part of his Defences. For the Thing is highly improbable in itself, and therefore never to be presumed. And if any just Ground had been given of imagining such a Thing, it would have been natural for any equitable Court, and especially a Court consisting of Ministers of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, in the Trial of one of their own Brethren, and one not inconsiderable for Station or Worth, to have asked the Defendant, in order to remove any Doubtfulness and to prevent Mistakes, that he might plainly declare, if or not he intended to pass from any of his Defences. But indeed in this Case he gave no Cause, even to suspect so much, the Omission above-mentioned being an Omission of a Thing wholly superfluous: For the Professor could not suppose it was possible to misunderstand him in the Manner that the Presbytery had told the Assembly they did. For, as their own Minutes bear in the Forenoon, they having very fairly given him an Opportunity, if he thought fit, to offer any Thing further and more special for his Defence than he had done; he said *he had something to add*, and was allowed so to do; and accordingly in the Afternoon gives in a Paper, without saying any Thing that is recorded in the Minute, and without saying or imagining any Thing in Reality, that he was then withdrawing an essential Part of his principal Defences. That Paper was the Addition which in the Forenoon he had promised to make, and had been allowed to do, of something more special: And indeed it consists only of a Division of the second general Defence, which he had formerly offered of the habitual Orthodoxy of his Lectures, into three different Branches of Particulars, in order to comply with the Presbytery's Question or Direction to him in the Forenoon, to make his Explanation somewhat more special. The other, which is the first total Defence against the Libel, he could not, for the Reasons before mentioned, render more special than he had done at first. Because it was unnecessary, being most distinctly proposed, and he not rememb'ring that he used the Words or Phrases libelled, in so general a Manner as to Time or Occasion, could not possibly say any Thing more special about the Discourse made by him when he uttered them; He had said all in that Defence, which it was needful or possible for a Man to say against such a Libel, who was conscious to himself of his being Orthodox in his Opinions, and of a constant Intention and Design to be so in his Lectures.

That the Injury done to the Professor by the Presbytery in over-ruling this Defence, was not made up to him, by their

afterwards permitting him to put Questions to the Witnesses, which they made use of for proving the Libel against him. For tho' a Defendant shall not be able to prove his Exculpation by the Pursuer's Witnesses, it cannot be inferred by any Judge, that therefore he could not have proven it, had he been permitted to bring Witnesses of his own, such as he knew or believed were best acquainted with the Matter. And there were in Reality many of his Students that were not examined by the Presbytery, whom he would have cited, had he been allowed at all to bring any Proof, tho' he did not offer any List of them to the Presbytery, seeing that appeared to him very unprofitable and incongruous, when they had in general refused to sustain his Exculpation, or allow him to bring a Proof of it. That therefore it was expected the General Assembly would redress the Wrong that had been done by the Presbytery of Glasgow, by over-ruling so just a Defence, + at least so far as not to proceed to find the Professor guilty of Error, without first allowing him a Proof of that Defence. For that the Professor, thro' Regard to the General Assembly, and to avoid all Suspicion of his intending to evade or disappoint a fair Trial, did not insist that the Assembly should then stop all Procedure in the Cause, till he should have Opportunity to bring the Proof that had been refused him: But was willing that the Assembly should proceed to judge of the Trial upon his other Defences, which he believed were sufficient for his Exculpation, without that first: But with Reservation always of that first Defence, in case the others should be found not relevant, or not proven.

That the second General Defence against the whole Libel, either as that Defence is laid in the Professor's Answers to the Libel, or as branched out in his additional Paper, was likewise relevant by itself, to free him altogether from the Charge of Error. For when a Professor appears to have habitually taught, asserted and maintained in his School, the whole Orthodox Doctrine concerning the Trinity, and particularly those very Articles which he is accused of having denied, and to have refuted those very Errors which he is charged with having asserted or favoured; it is not surely an Expression or two, once or very seldom falling from him, that can be thought an Evidence of his being an Heretick, but these are rather to be ascribed to the Natural Inadvertancy, which every Man is subject to, or to the particular Weakness or Infirmity of Health, which the Professor at the Time laboured under; rather than to suppose these few Expressions proceeded from a settled Heretical Opinion in the Mind of the Teacher, and a Design craftily to insinuate the same into his Scholars: Which to

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<sup>†</sup> Nota, This Qualification was added the next Day.

suppose, when the Matter of this Defence is at the same Time considered, seems to be contrary to all human Probability, as well as to legal Evidence or Christian Charity.

That this is true, supposing these few Expressions, at some Times uttered by the Professor to be manifestly and necessarily erroneous, admitting of no possible sound Construction. But the Argument proceeds with still greater Force, when the Expressions are not of that kind, but dubious or equivocal, and only erroneous when used or taken in the worst Sense they can bear, which is the Case of almost every Article laid in this Libel: For then the Question is only upon Interpretation, and whether the Speaker shall be understood in the worst Sense, or in the sound Sense, when the latter only agrees to the constant Tenor of his Doctrine and Profession. And in that Question it is very plain, what all the Rules of Judgment upon Earth must determine.

That in case notwithstanding of these Defences, the Assembly should find, that the Professor had taught or maintained Error, there was a third Point remaining, which was a relevant Defence to exclude any Sentence condemning him as erroneous, *viz.* That he had at the Bar solemnly disowned and disavowed all the Errors laid to his Charge: So that if ever he had taught or maintained any such, he now retracted them, and therefore could not in Reason, nor by any Law Civil or Ecclesiastical, be condemned for the same.

That it is agreeable to Reason, that a Man, whose Crime consists in the Emission of Words, which may be inconsiderately spoken, and easily mistaken by the Hearers, should be afterwards allowed, when he recollects himself, and speaks deliberately and with Coolness either to explain his former Meaning, or to declare his present Sentiments, so as to remove any Malignity or Crime that might otherwise be found in the Words which he had spoken. And upon this Principle it was, that the *Greeks* and *Romans* allowed a verbal Injury to be purged or taken away by the Party accused his making Oath, *Nolle se injuriam factam vel indignum esse adversarium bac contumelia*, Math. Tit. *de injuriis*, N. 16.

That further, even where it was evident and certain, That a Man had vented Error, yet the Laws of the Church did not suffer him to be condemned for it, in case he should retract the same. The Rule of the Gospel in this Case is found in Tit. 3. 10. *A Man that is an Heretick after the first and second Admonition reject*, which plainly signifies and is interpreted by Commentators, if he shall *obstinately persist* he is to be condemned, and not otherwise; that the Rule of the Canon Law is the same which is thus expressed in the Institutes subjoined to the *Corpus Canonicum*, Tit. *de Hereticis*, Par. 3d. *In Heresi autem deprehensi, Si clerici sint, vel religiosi, totius*

ordinis Ecclesiastici prerogativa spoliandi erunt, & omni officio  
 & beneficio nudati, nisi continuo post reprehensionem erroris ad  
 fidei Catholice unitatem recurrere, & errorem suam publice ab-  
 jurare, & congraam satisfactionem exhibere consenserint. And  
 agreeable to these is the particular Law of this Church, con-  
 cerning Ecclesiastical Proces against Ministers for Error, that  
 is contained in the Form of Proces, Chap. 7. Par. 8. in these  
 Words, " If the Matter laid to the Minister's Charge, be —  
 " Unsoundness and Heterodoxy in Doctrine — and if the  
 " Errors be not gross, — or if they be not pertinaciously  
 " stuck unto, or industriously spread, — or that they are  
 " not spreading among the People, then, (i. e. in any of  
 these Cases which are disjunctively put by the Particle Or)  
 " Lenitives, Admonitions, Instructions and frequent Conferences  
 " are to be tried to reclaim without cutting off." And in this  
 the Form of Proces is manifestly different and opposite from  
 what is prescribed in the Case of Immoralities found in a Mi-  
 nister. (Par. 5. of the same Chapter.) For then whatever be the  
 Nature of his Penitency, tho' to the Conviction of all, he is  
 instantly to be deposed *ab officio*; but tho' he were found to  
 have been truly Heterodox in his Doctrine, yet there is still  
 locus penitentiae for a great while, and if he do not pertinaciously  
 stick to the Heresy, a Method is to be taken with him  
 quite different from an instant Deposition, and more agree-  
 able to the express Rule of the Gospel, as well as to Reason,  
 Charity and the Canon Law, and in the present Case the Pro-  
 fessor has been far from pertinaciously sticking to any Error, for  
 he has all along disowned the Fact of his maintaining any one  
 erroneous Tenet, and has all along asserted and declared his  
 Belief of every Truth which he is alledged to have impugned.  
 And that if so much Pains is to be taken with a Minister,  
 who has actually been in an Error, that frequent Instructions  
 and Conferences are to be used to reclaim him, without cut-  
 ting off: Which supposes that in these Conferences he might  
 modestly propose his Reasons for the Heretical Opinion he had  
 vented, and even maintain the Argument till the Point should  
 be discussed, providing he did not pertinaciously stick to his  
 Error, but hearkning with Attention and Docility to the Ar-  
 guments of his Brethren, in support of the Truth, from which  
 he had erred for a while, should suffer himself to be convinced  
 and reclaimed. With how much more Reason, should Lenitives  
 be used in the present Case, where the Professor and his Bre-  
 thren are agreed, as he always declared, in their Opinions  
 on the Points of Doctrine; and the only Question betwixt them  
 is, Whether in Fact he ever has said or uttered any Thing  
 to the contrary? If a Minister is to be allowed to say (as  
 all the foresaid Rules do allow him) *I was in an Error, and  
 have vented Error, but I am now convinced of it, and do re-  
 tract*

tract it : How much more shall he be allowed to say, *By a few rash, or ambiguous Words, which possibly may be proved to have been uttered by me, during a long Course of teaching, and under a heavy Illness, I never meant or intended any Thing erroneous, but, as I always taught, do still believe the Orthodox Doctrine of this Church in every Article of it.*

That it is true Men may be deceitful and dissemble with their Superiors on Earth: But it is against all Rule, from Pre-possessions, or private Suspicion, and Conviction, to presume against any Man that he dissembled, without manifest Evidence of it ; and what that is, the Scripture tells us in the Text before cited, viz. That if a Man relapse into Heresy after being once and again admonished of it, and no doubt seeming to repent at that Time, otherwise if pertinacious, he would deserve to be rejected at first, The latter of the two Declarations just mentioned is of its Nature by far the more credible. And there is nothing in the Professor's private personal Character, nor in the Circumstances of the Proof to make it less so: But on the contrary, he is known to be of a Temper the farthest remote from hiding or dissembling his real Sentiments, and there is nothing in the Proof of his teaching the Doctrine of the Confession of Faith concerning the Trinity, that can admit of any Suspicion that he did it not *bona fide*, and as what he believed himself, and endeavoured to make his Scholars understand and believe.

*N. B. The Exculpation as adapted to the Particular Articles, is intermixed with the Pleading upon the Proof of them.*



## Q U E R I E S.

**T**HE Reverend Mr. McLaren having asserted more than once in the General Assembly, That the Three Persons of the *Blessed Trinity* are as equal in their *personal Properties*, as in their *Essential-perfections*; it is humbly and earnestly desired, for the Instruction and Edification of all good Christians in this Church, and for the clearing and vindicating of the Truth of this fundamental Article of the Christian Religion, that he be obliged to answer the following Questions: Seeing this Opinion tends to render Men dark and uncertain, as to what they ought to believe concerning the Father's being of None, neither begotten nor proceeding; and the Son's being eternally begotten of the Father; and the Holy Ghost his proceeding eternally from the Father and the Son.

imo,

1mo, Whether the Son and Holy Ghost be equally of None, neither begotten nor proceeding, as the Father?

2do, Whether the Father be not begotten as truly as the Son? And whether he proceeds from the Son and Holy Ghost, as the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father and Son?

3to, Whether Three Persons equally of None, neither begotten nor proceeding, be not Three Gods?



## PLEADING upon the Proof of the Second and Third Articles as stated in Four Heads by the Assembly.

**U**PON the Sixteenth of May, the Assembly proceeded to the Consideration of the Proof, both of the Articles which had then been found Relevant, and of the Grounds of Exculpation, Whereof any Proof had arisen from the Witnesses brought against the Professor, and heard him and his Council upon the same. And their Pleadings upon the Subject of the Proof, were in Substance as follows.

That, as it was before observ'd upon the Relevancy, there was some-what in General upon the Rule of judging the Probation in this Case, that was not improper to be observ'd for the Defendant, by Reason of the Apprehension he had that some of the Members entertain'd an Opinion as if they might, in a Court and Trial of this Sort, proceed upon private Conviction or Belief in their own Minds, and not to be tied up, as the Judges in Civil Courts are, to condemn only where there is a strictly legal Proof, as well as a Conviction in the Judges Mind of the Crime.

That such a Proof was necessary in the present Case, the Trial of a Minister for Error of the grossest Kind, might be prov'd by manifold Arguments both from Reason and Authority; that the Nature of the Thing required it, because the Truth of the Accusation was improbable and unlikely, that a Minister of the Professor's Learning and unblameable Life, should fall into such gross Heresies; that the common Charity and brotherly Love of his Judges, would naturally dispose them to be unwilling, and slow to admit the Truth of it, without an Evidence, that it could not be resisted.

That besides the common Principles of all the Civil Laws in the World, which plead for this, that a legal Proof is requisite in all Trials; The Canon Law, is particularly express as to Heresy, the Subject of the present Trial, which in the Chapter be-

fors

fore cited in the Pleading upon the Exculpation, is contained in these Words, *Qui vero inventi fuerint, sola suspicione notabiles, ob eam quantumvis vehementem de tam gravi crimine condemnandi non erunt*: And that the Canon Law, tho' not a binding Rule in this Church, is yet of an Authority, which as an Argument must be every where respected.

And that the sacred Text it self, is express to the same Purpose, 1 Tim. v. 19. *Against an Elder receive not an Accusation but before two or three Witnesses*: Which is one of the Laws whereof the Observation is inforc'd in the following Words of the 21 Verse, in a very singular and remarkable Stile, *I charge thee before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Elect Angels, that thou observe these Things*. And the Text it self of the 19th Verse requires that nothing less, but rather somewhat more then what amounts to a legal Evidence in a common Case, is to be admitted in the Accusation of an Elder, when it speaks of *two or three Witnesses*; whereas by the Law of Moses, as well as most of the Civil Laws in the World, two Witnesses are sufficient for Proof of a Crime. And further, the Text requires this full Evidence, before *an Accusation of an Elder be received*, which is interpreted by some, to signify that such Evidence must appear by Way of Precognition, even before he be brought to Trial; And far more is it necessary, before he be condemned.

That agreeable to these Rules, the Form of Process of this Church directs, that *against the Reputation of Ministers no Charge for unsound Doctrine ought lightly to be received, and that in the Trial thereof great Caution ought to be used, and the Knowledge and Understanding of the Witnesses much looked into, &c.*

That in judging of the Evidence in this Case, with Justice to the Professor, it is necessary, carefully to avoid one Thing, which some had shewn a Disposition to go into, viz. the mixing or conjoining with the Evidence in Process, any Suspicions, Jealousies, or even private Opinion or Conviction, if there were any such, of the Professor's being erroneous in his Opinions, arising either from Reports and Suggestions, or from any Part of the Professor's Behaviour since this Inquiry concerning him began, whether relating to the Queries propos'd to him or otherwise: For, supposing he had given just Cause of Suspicion, (as it was humbly thought he had not in Point of Heresy, whatever he might have done in the Matter of Conduct) yet there is one Way of Dealing with a Person suspected of Heresy, and another Way with a Person directly and formally accus'd, and who is brought upon his Trial for having taught and vented Errors: He who has given Cause of Suspicion, is to be brought, by all proper Methods of Inquiry, to give Satisfaction in order to remove those Suspicions, either by clearing

ing his Innocence, or by acknowledging his Error; But when a Man is proceeded against in the Way of Trial, *Suspicions* can no longer take Place or be regarded, there must then be a full Proof or nothing can be concluded against the Party accused; *Suspicions* can in no Case, whether singly or join'd with imperfect Evidence, be the Ground of condemning, nor be of any Use, but to make the Party against whom they ly clear or purge himself, in a proper Way from the Matter of those *Suspicions*.—The Case, then, as it now stands, must be determined singly upon the Proof brought against the Professor upon this Libel it self, and upon no other extrinsec Evidence whatever that may be supposed to make against him.

That hoping the Venerable Assembly would admit these Principles concerning Proof, and be ruled by them in judging this Cause, they (the Advocates) proceeded to point out, and make some Remarks on the Proof of the Articles found relevant, and of the Exculpation that has arisen from the Presbytery of Glasgow's own Witnesses, viz. the Professor's usual and constant Doctrine; and they hop'd to show that there was neither a legal nor a satisfying Evidence of the Professor's having trespassed in any of the Points found relevant by the Assembly.

As to the first Article, viz. *The denying the Necessary-existence of Christ*.

This Article must certainly be understood of the denying of the *Necessary-existence* in the ordinary Acceptation of the Word, as it signifies an *Impossibility not to have been*, which is one of the Essential Perfections of the Divine Nature that belong equally to all the Three Persons of the *Blessed Trinity*. Now the only Proof that is alledged of this is, what is adduced upon the Third Article of the Libel, which, supposing it were proven, (as has been already observed upon the Relevancy of that Article) does not infer the same.

But in the next Place there is no sufficient Proof of that Article of the Libel, for there are only Three Witnesses adduced upon it, and their Testimonies, when duly considered, do not make it out: For *Alexander Duncan* the 4th Witness only says, "That the Professor asserted to the best of his Remembrance, *Christus est eternus non tamen necessarius*, but is not positive these are the exact Words the Professor uttered," which is just no Testimony at all.

*Edward Boyd* the Third Witness, depones, "That the Professor shewed himself dissatisfied with *Mark's Argument*, and added or said, *Christus est eternus sed non ens necessarium*, or *non necessario existit, or non necessarius est*:" But then it is to be observed, that, tho' he says that the said Argument of *Mark* is against the Eternity of the World, yet he declares he does not mind the Words that the Professor shewed his Dis-

satis-

satisfaction with the said Argument by. Now unless the Witness could have told the whole Words that the Professor used on that Occasion, it can never appear how that Sentence, which the Professor is said to have uttered, *Christus est eternus, &c.* came in; whether the Professor spoke it as his own Opinion, or whether he was only reciting the Opinion of Dr. Clark, the Aristotelians and others: For the bare Saying of these Words could never be Criminal, unless we knew the Manner, Order and Connection, in which they were uttered; which this Witness gives no Account of, because he did not remember the Words which preceeded these condescended upon by him. And therefore this Testimony can be of no Force against the Professor.

This will appear further from a Parallel Instance, suppose one were preaching against the Atheists, and should have Occasion to take Notice of some Arguments that are brought against the Atheists, which he thought not conclusive, and some Time thereafter he should have Occasion to cite that Text, *The Fool hath said in his Heart there is no God:* If that Minister should be thereafter accused of impugning or denying the Existence of God, and a Witness should be found that should depone that he heard the Minister, while he pretended to be Preaching against the Atheists, refute some Arguments that are sometimes adduced against them, and that he added or said, that *there was not a God*, but that he does not mind the Words in which he refuted the abovementioned Arguments; 'tis evident such a Testimony could never convict the Minister of Preaching *Atheism*; because, tho' he said these Words, that *there is not a God*, yet it does not appear from what the Witness has said, how they came in or were used: And this Instance will apply exactly to the Case in Hand, in as far as is founded on this Witness's Testimony, which does noways prove the Article libelled.

There remains therefore but only one Witness, *Alexander Bar* the 15th, who seems indeed to tell his Story more circumstantiately, by saying that the Professor gave this Reason for his Disatisfaction at *Mark's Argument*; *Nam Christus est eternus, sed non ens necessarium, seu non necessario existit:* But here it is to be noticed, *imo*, That he is only a single Witness, and by the Rules of Scripture, and the Laws of all Nations in all Ages, the Testimony of one Witness is not a just and legal Proof against any Person.

*2do*, This Witness does not tell the whole Words that the Professor used on that Occasion: And without these, we cannot know whether the Words condescended upon were brought in, in such a Manner as to imply any Error of the Professor's own; possibly, if we had the whole Argument which the Professor used on that Occasion, it might appear that this Expression

pression condescended on, could not agree with the other Reasonings the Professor then used.

3<sup>to</sup>, The only Thing in this Testimony which seems to insinuate that these Words were used by the Professor as a Part of his own Argument is in the Particle *Nam*: But then this may possibly be the Witness's own Word, by which he has thought fit to connect the Words, *Christus est*, &c. with the Account that is here given of the Professor's Argument; and its being in Latin is no Evidence that it is the Professor's Word, for the Witness has put a Word of his own, which should be *Or*, into Latin, by the Particle *seu*, in these Words, *Non est ens necessarium, seu non necessario existit*, where the Particle *seu* is plainly the Witness's Word, his Meaning being that the Professor said, *Non est ens necessarium, or non necessario existit*.

4<sup>to</sup>, We find this Witness has put upon the Professor, in other Parts of his Oath, long Pieces of *Non-sense* in very barbarous Latin, which no Person that ever heard the Professor teach can believe he spoke: Which therefore weakens this Witness's Testimony very much; especially when it is considered that he read his Deposition from off a Paper which he had write the Night before, which ought not to have been allowed, because if he could not deliver without his Papers what he thought on the Night before, how can it be imagined that he could distinctly remember the Professor's Words which he had uttered above Fifteen Months before that?

5<sup>to</sup>, This Witness was very young, being only 20 Years when he deponed, and consequently not much above 18 at the Time when what he depones is said to have happened; so that he might very easily have mistaken the Professor's Words, being only a young Student who had attended the Divinity-Hall not above two Months at that Time.

6<sup>to</sup>, This is the more probable that what he depones upon is altogether extrinsic to the Subject the Professor was treating of, *De creatione mundi*; especially considering what Mr. Lewis Chapman depones, That the Professor was in use to teach that there is an utter Disparity betwixt the Eternity of the World and the Eternal Generation of the Son of God, and that he gave this Reason for it, that the World must be finite, whereas the Son of God must be infinite and of illimitable Perfections.

7<sup>tho</sup>, That there has been a Mistake in this Matter is further probable from this, That of the thirty Witnesses who have been examined, none of them could say that the Professor used any such Expression, save the three Witnesses above-mentioned, who, as they do not agree in the precise Words, so neither do they agree as to the Time, so that they are not contestes to any one particular Fact. Now 'tis more likely that

that two or three Persons might have mistaken the Professor's Words, than that such a Expression, if it had been deliberately said, should have escaped the Observation of a much greater Number, who, by their Depositions, seem to be fully as capable to understand a Divinity Lecture, and it is impossible that they could have forgot it, if they had heard it.

8vo, What the Professor has proven by a vast many Witnesses in his Exculpation, that he taught, *That the Son hath all Divine Perfections, that all the essential Perfections of the Father agree to the Son, that whatever could be affirmed of the Father ought to be affirmed of the Son, except his personal Property.*\* This being the constant Tenor of the Professor's Doctrine, makes it highly improbable, that ever he should have uttered any Expression importing a Denial of the *Necessary-existence* of Christ, as it is an essential Perfection of the Divine Nature, that is equally common to all the Three Persons of the Trinity.

As to the second Article found relevant, That the Professor should have said, *That the Necessary-existence of Christ was a Thing we knew not*; it is not proven, as will appear by running through the Depositions of the Witnesses adduced on this Head.

*Alexander Duncan* the 4th Witness, Depones, "That a Student propounded a Difficulty, and in urging the same, Christ's *Necessary-existence* came to be handled, but does not remember the Way in which it was proposed, viz. Whether directly, or by Inference: Depones, as he thinks, The Professor said in Answer to this, We do not know, or that it was a Thing we knew nothing about, or other Words, which the Deponent is certain did bear no other necessary Meaning."

Here it is to be observed, 1mo, That a Witness's Testimony, *as to the Meaning*, ought not to be regarded, because that would be making him a Judge of the Doctrine or Meaning; whereas he was only Witness to the Fact or Words emitted, and the Judicatory must judge of the Import and Meaning of the Words. 2do, This Witness does not remember the Way in which the Question concerning Christ's *Necessary-existence* was proposed, whether directly, or by Inference. Now, if it was only by Inference, as is most probable from what the other Witnesses say, then the saying *we do not know, or that was a Thing we knew nothing about*, implies only a doubting of the Inference, not a Denial of the *Necessary-existence* itself: And so this Witness proves nothing upon this Article.

¶ Meek

\* *Jervey, W. 11. Campbell, W. 12. Banantyne, W. 18. Miller, W. 19. McGae, W. 20. Stirling, W. 26. Cotes, W. 28. Ritchie, W. 2.*

Meek the 16th Witness, Depones, "That when the Objection  
 " was made by a Student, as mentioned in the Libel, and  
 " former Depositions, he heard the Professor answer, *Neither you*  
 " *nor I know any Thing about that.*" Now, the Objection men-  
 tioned in the Libel and other Depositions, tho' it is not men-  
 tioned the same Way in both, is in Substance this, That if the  
 Son was not *Independent* in the same Sense as what the Father  
 was, he could not be *Necessarily-existent*; And if the Professor  
 in Answer to this, said, *Neither you nor I knew any Thing about*  
*that*, it is only a Denial or Doubting of that Consequence,  
 which is very far from denying the *Necessary-existence* of Christ  
 itself.

Brown the 6th Witness, Depones, That the Professor's An-  
 swer to the Student's Objection was, *We knew not these Things,*  
*or we knew not whether he might have had a Being or not,*  
*but is not positive which of these it was.* Now, if it was the  
 last of these, this Witness is singular; and if it was the first,  
 it is only saying, *We knew not that Consequence*: And in-  
 deed this Witness seems to be altogether singular as to his Ac-  
 count of the Matter, for there are four clear Witnesses, Mrs.  
 Barr, Hamilton, William Boyd and Langford, who concur,  
 that the Professor's Answer to the Student's Objection, viz. If  
 not *Independent*, *he could not be Necessarily-existent*, was, *How*  
*do you know that?* Which is only a Denial of that Consequence,  
 and is rather an Assertion of Christ's *Necessary-existence*, than  
 a direct Denial of it. And this is further cleared from what  
 Johnston the 29th Witness depones, "That when a Student  
 " made an Objection to the Purpose of the Objection laid in  
 " the Libel, about the Son's being *Independent* of the Father;  
 " The Professor answered, *Do you think he is Independent of*  
 " *his Father, certainly none can suppose or affirm that, and*  
 " *that he is not begotten, altho' our shallow or finite Ca-*  
 " *pacities cannot possibly comprehend, or have any Notion of*  
 " *the Modus or Manner of this Generation.*"

William Boyd the 29th Witness, Depones, That the Professor  
 began his Answer with these Words, *Now how do you know*  
*that?* Which Words were introductory to something that  
 followed, probalby what Johnston has told us. Then the  
 Student replied, "It is possible the Son might not have been, and  
 " the Father might have been without him: Then the Professor  
 " spoke first something to that, which the Deponent had forgot;  
 " but the last Thing he spoke, with Relation to this, was,  
*That is a Philosophical Nicety we knew nothing about;*" but unless  
 these Words which he has forgot were produced, we cannot  
 know what the Professor called a *Philosophical Nicety*, which  
 he was not cert. in about. Upon the whole, there is no suffi-  
 cient Evidence from the above-mentioned Testimonies, that

proves

proves the Professor has transgressed in this second Article found relevant by the Assembly.

As to third Article, *The denying the Independency of the Deity of Christ*, there is not the least Shadow of Proof, that the Professor was guilty of this: For it appears from the whole Depositions, that the Reasoning used betwixt the Professor and the Student did only concern what the Schoolmen called the *independentia personalis*.

As to the 4th Article, *viz.* The calling the Terms *Necessary-existence* and *Independency*, *Impertinent* and *Philosophical Niceties*.

As to the Word *Necessary-existence*, there are only two Witnesses who say he quarrelled it, *viz.* Brown the 6th, who says that the Professor said these Terms were *impertinent*, and *not to be used* in speaking of the Trinity, or *Words to that Purpose*, which is no positive Evidence.

The next Witness on this Head is *McClae*, who only says that the Professor said, *That these Terms were not used in Scripture, and were impertinent*; But, besides that he is singular as to the Term *Necessary-existence*, the only Meaning that these Words have, is, that these Terms not being used in Scripture, they were not so pertinent or fit to be used concerning the Trinity, as Scriptural Terms are; and *Necessary-existence* being there joined with the Term *Independency*, (which is only the *independentia personalis*, as appears from the Connection) must signify the same with *being of None*.

As to the Term *Independence*, it appears from the Depositions of Mrs. Chapman, Ritchie, Brown, William Boyd, Barr and Stirling, That the Professor is there speaking only of the Term *Independence*, which, when treating of the *personal Properties* of the Father and Son, could not be so pertinently used as Scriptural Expressions; or that it was not to be applied to the Relations of the Divine Persons.

As to the calling these Terms *Philosophical Niceties*. There are only two Witnesses which touch on this, *viz.* William Boyd, who does not remember what went before that Expression, and consequently what it was the Professor called a *Philosophical Nicety*. And Thomas Hamilton says, That the Professor's Answer to the Student's Objection, *How do you or we know that?* And added, (whether after urging the first Part of the Difficulty, or after both Parts, he is not positive) that we are not so nicely to philosophize, when speaking of the Persons of the Trinity, or that these were Philosophical Niceties. So that he is not positive, which of these two the Professor said, and so there is no positive Proof on this Head.

Upon the whole, as there is no good or sufficient Evidence against the Professor, upon any of these Heads; so, supposing the Proof from the Depositions of the Witnesses had been much stronger

stronger and more pregnant than it is, yet it deserves to be remarked, that the Professor could not be condemned as guilty of Heresy or teaching Error, upon any Proof arising from the Testimony of Witnesses concerning Words emitted; For no Instance can be given that any Person was ever condemned for Heresy upon a Proof by Witnesses; all those who were condemned for Error, of whom Church History gives us any Account, were only condemned upon their own Confession, or upon Writ which they owned or gave under their Hands. And the Reason is very plain; Words spoke do strike the Ear in so transient a Manner, that Hearers may very easily mistake them; and a Mistake in any the smallest Particle or Circumstance in a Speech, will so alter the Sense as to change Truth into Error; so that there is the greatest Exactness requisite, which can never be had from Witnesses with any Degree of Certainty; and to convict one of Error, to be sure, requires the strongest Evidence and most convincing Proof; and daily Experience teaches us how apt Hearers are to mistake the Words and Meaning of what they hear, so that it is evident no Testimonies of Witnesses can be a sufficient Probation, whereupon to convict one of being guilty of teaching Error:



### **PLEADING on the Relevancy of the Fourth Article.**

**U**PON the Seventeenth of May, the Assembly proceeded to the Fourth Article of the Libel, upon which Mr. Simson, and his Council were heard, and their Pleadings against the Relevancy of that Article were in Substance as follows:

" Article Fourth, in teaching you gave it as your own Opinion and the Judgment of the Primitive Fathers, that the Three Persons of the Trinity are not to be said to be either Numerically or Specifically one in Substance or Essence; but added that they were so the same as to be one God in Three Persons, but gave not any Name to, nor attempted to give any Notion of that Sameness or Oneness; nor can there be any but Numerical Oneness of Substance or Essence consistent with the Godhead, who is but one in Number and not more."

That if the Professor had said any Thing importing a Denial of the Unity of the Godhead, which is the very First Principle of all Religion, it had certainly been relevant to make him guilty of the greatest of all Heresies: And that if a Proposition were extracted out of this Article, and plac'd by it self

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in these Words, That the Three Persons of the Trinity are not to be said to be Numerically one in Substance or Essence ; and if in that Proposition the Phrase *Numerically One* be taken in the ordinary vulgar Meaning of it, to signify *Simple Unity*, in Opposition to the *Number Two*, *Three*, and all other *Plurality of Numbers*, it would certainly be a most grossly erroneous Proposition, and he who spoke it as his own Opinion, must indeed be one of the worst of Hereticks. But, as this Article is laid in the Libel, no such Proposition is charged against Mr. *Simson*, nor can the Word *Numerically*, spoken by him in the Manner libelled, be understood in this most erroneous Sense, which excludes the *Divine Unity* : But on the contrary, the Article it self bears the Professor's Exculpation in its Bosom, and shews, by the very Manner of the Professor's teaching, as laid in this Article, that by rejecting the Term *Numerically*, he meant not to impugn this fundamental Article of the *Unity of the Godhead*.

For in the Libel it is said, *That he gave it as his own Opinion, and the Judgment of the Primitive Fathers*, which shows that he could not intend to insinuate an Error so gross as that of impugning the *Unity*, which no one could imagine to have been the Opinion of the Primitive Fathers.

And the Libel further sets forth, *That he gave it as his own Opinion, That the Three Persons are not to be said to be either Numerically or Specifically one in Substance or Essence*; and if nothing further had been added than these Words, it seems impossible to imagine, that this Proposition included a Denial of the *Unity*; for the rejecting the Word *Specifical*, as well as the Word *Numerical*, must necessarily remove any Suspicion of an unsound Sense that might be implied in rejecting the Term *Numerical* alone : Because that unsound Sense is absolutely excluded by the mentioning and rejecting at the same Time of the Term *Specifical*: For this latter does plainly import a Denial of any *Plurality of Gods*; And therefore the former, spoken with the same Breath, cannot be understood to affirm such a *Plurality*; But must necessarily have been us'd in a Sense consistent with the other Member of the same Sentence; which Sense can be no other than what the Professor affirms he always mean'd when he rejected the Use of the Term *Numerically*, when applied as in the Libel, viz. in so far as it signifies, as it does when applied to Creatures, a *Unity of Persons*, or that is inconsistent with a *Plurality of Persons*.

But to put the Matter farther out of Doubt, the Libel it self sets forth, that the Professor added the *Divine Persons were so the same, as to be one God in Three Persons*: Which must have rendered it impossible for his Hearers so far to misunderstand his rejecting of the Word *Numerical*, as to imagine he thereby mean'd to impugn the *Divine Unity*.

The Libel indeed goes on, charging it on the Professor as a Fault, That he gave not any Name to, nor attempted to give any Notion of that Sameness or Oneness, and adds by Way of Argument, That there cannot be any but Numerical Oneness of Substance or Essence which is consistent with the Godhead who is but one in Number and not more. And truly if this be all that the Framers of the Libel have to say, in order to perform what they charge the Professor as having omitted; and if this be what they would have had him to say, in giving a Name to, or a Notion of that Unity, they have made his Excuse even in arguing against him; for they have said no more than the Libel bears the Professor to have said in Effect, and even more forcibly: For what are we profited by being told, as a Name to that Oneness, that it is Numerical, and as a Notion of it that it is but one and not more.

It is indeed all that can be said. And so far the Presbytery which framed the Libel are in the Right; But it is no more than the Professor has said, and therefore they are in the Wrong, to find Fault with him for not saying enough: For the only Thing they do, which he has not done, is the using of a Word which adds no Light to the Matter; for what Idea do we get by the Term *Numerically one* further than by the simple Word *One*? Or what further Notion of *Unity* by being told that it excludes *Plurality*? Has not the Professor said all this as the Libel it self expressly bears? viz. That there is but one God in Three Persons; and that there is not a Plurality of Substances in the Godhead, which the rejecting the Term *Specifical* necessarily imports, as well as there is more than a Unity of Persons, which is the only Thing that the rejecting the Term *Numerical* can import when join'd with the other? It is not surely a Fault to assert both the Parts of this mysterious Truth at once; and in asserting the *Unity of the Godhead*, to be ever mindful of the *Trinity of Persons*, and in asserting the *Trinity* always to remember the *Unity of the Godhead*.

The Professor has asserted both, in Terms that could not be misunderstood, and is not alledged to have said separately that the Three Divine Persons were not of One Numerical Substance, which indeed had been very unsafe, and, without some Explication subjoined, very unsound, and would have imported a Denial of the *Divine Unity*. But the rejecting that Word in the Manner libelled, was neither unsound nor could be unsafe, because with the same Breath the *Plurality of Substances* was denied, and the *Unity of the Godhead in the Trinity of Persons*, affirmed in the plainest Manner.

And what Notion could he possibly give of that *Unity*, other than the Presbytery of Glasgow has given in the Libel, and have admitted that the Professor gave, viz. That it is such a proper and simple *Unity*, as excludes a *Plurality of Gods or Sub-*

*Substances?* And was it not proper at the same Time, to add as the Libel says the Professor did, *That it was such a Unity as admits of Three Persons?* What would they have had him to say more? Was he to pretend to explain the *Manner* how these two were consistent? Who can tell that, or find out the *Almighty to Perfection?* To that Question there can be no Answer, but that the Thing is revealed, and is therefore humbly to be adored and believed; but that it is a *Mystery* the *Manner* whereof is not revealed, and therefore we can neither comprehend nor explain it.

The Proof of this Article will further show that the Professor never rejected the Use of the Term *Numerical*, without at the same Time explaining the Sense in which he took it, so as to exclude any unsound Meaning in his rejecting it. But indeed there seems to be no Use for the Proof of an Exculpation, when the Exculpation is contained in the very Article of the Libel itself; for whatever in a Libel makes for the Defender, is as good as fully proved in favours of him, and no further Proof of it is necessary.\*

### A PAPER which Mr. SIMSON gave in to the Assembly, May 18. 1727.

Professor Simson humbly offers to the Venerable Assembly, for his Vindication, his Sentiments upon the Subject of the Articles of the Libel against him that have been found relevant by the Assembly.

1st, That Christ is *Necessarily-existent* in the common and ordinary Sense of that Word, as it signifies an *Impossibility* not to have been, which is one of the Essential Perfections of the Divine Nature that are equally common to all the Three Persons.

2dly, That *Independency* is to be affirmed of the Son of God, as it signifies an Essential Perfection of his Divine Nature, which is equally common to all the Persons of the Trinity.

3dly, That the Three Persons of the Trinity are of one Substance in Number, not taken in such a Sense as that Phrase is in common Use applied to Creatures, which restricts it to one Person, but in a Sense importing the strictest Unity of the

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God.

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\* See the Professor's Answer to this Article, Page 56—59.

Godhead in Opposition to a Plurality of Gods, yet consistently with their being Three Persons in Opposition to one Person.

JOHN SIMSON.

## ACT of the General Assembly.

Edinburgh, May 18. 1727.

THE General Assembly considering that it is not practicable for them to overtake what yet remains of the Process laid before them from the Reports of the last Assembly's Committee for Purity of Doctrine, and the Presbytery of Glasgow, concerning Mr. John Simson Professor of Divinity in the University of Glasgow, in such a Manner as the Variety of the Matter, and great Importance thereof, as also the clearing and vindicating of Divine Truths require: And yet that it is fit, that the Supreme Judicatory of this Church only should give a final Determination therein; did therefore agree that the same be delayed till the next General Assembly. And in order to the further preparing and ripening this whole Affair, appointed the Persons aforesaid, viz. Mr. William Hamilton Professor of Divinity in the University of Edinburgh their Moderator, Masters James Haddow Principal of the New College of St. Andrews, William Wishart Principal of the College of Edinburgh, George Chalmers Principal of the King's College of Aberdeen, Thomas Blackwell Principal of the New College of Aberdeen, David Anderson Professor of Divinity in the King's College of Aberdeen, Matthew Crawford Professor of Ecclesiastick History in the University of Edinburgh, William Mitchell at Edinburgh, James Ramsay at Kelso, Allan Logan at Culross, Thomas Black at Perth, Thomas Linnen at Lesmahago, William M'George at Penycock, John Hamilton at Glasgow, Samuel Semple at Libertoun, James Mercer at Aberdalgie, Robert Woodrow at Eastwood, James Smith at Cramond, James Bannantyne at Edinburgh, James Craig there, John Brand at Borrowstounness, William Miller at Edinburgh, Alexander Anderson at St. Andrews, John Mathison at Edinburgh, John Scot at Glasgow, and Alexander Robertson at Tinwald, Ministers. The Right Honourable Adam Cockburn of Ormiston Lord Justice Clerk, Mr. James Erskine of Grange, Mr. James Hamilton of Pancaitland, and Mr. Hugh Dalrymple of Drumore, four of the Senators of the College of Justice, George Drummond Esquire, Lord Provost of Edinburgh, Mr. Robert Dundas of Arniston Advocate, Colonel

lonel John Erskine of Carnock, and Mr. James Boswell of Auchinleck Advocate, Ruling Elders, to be a Committee, whereof Thirteen to be a Quorum, and Nine always to be Ministers; and that their first Meeting shall be in the Old Church Isle of Edinburgh, upon Monday the Twenty second Instant, at Nine of the Clock in the Forenoon, and their subsequent stated Meetings to be upon Tuesday before each quarterly Meeting of the Commission of this General Assembly in the same Place at four of the Clock in the Afternoon, with Power to them to chuse their own Moderator and Clerk, and to adjourn themselves to such Times and Places as they shall see Cause; and the Assembly hereby earnestly obtests all the Members of the said Committee, punctually to attend as they shall be accountable to the next General Assembly; and it is hereby declared, that any Ministers of the Presbytery of Glasgow, who shall attend the Meetings of this Committee, shall be Members thereof, tho' not of the above Nomination. And the General Assembly gives full Power to the said Committee to proceed upon the Articles in the Proces, both as to the Libel and Queries, and what has followed thereupon, not judged by this Assembly, and upon what else is contained in the Act of the last Assembly for preserving Purity of Doctrine, which the Presbytery of Glasgow and former Committee could not overtake; and that they proceed in the whole, hereby committed to them, conform to the Powers and Directions of that Act, and *usque ad sententiam*, but shall not pass a Sentence either absolving or condemning Mr. Simson, but report their Diligence to the next General Assembly: All being referred to their Judgment. And it is recommended to the Presbytery of Glasgow to be assistant to the Committee, as they shall be required by them. And Mr. Simson is appointed to attend upon the said Committee, when called by them, and upon the next General Assembly when and where they shall happen to meet. And the General Assembly in the interim, on account of the Articles in the Libel charged on Mr. Simson, which have been found relevant and proven, judged he ought to be suspended; likeas, they hereby suspend him from teaching and preaching, till the Meeting of the next General Assembly.

F I N I S.



THE





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